

**TAU:
A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TONGAN MILITARY FROM THE LATE NINETEENTH
CENTURY TO THE PRESENT**

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the origins of the modern Tongan Military from the establishment of the Tongan monarchy in 1875 to the Military's most recent engagements into the 21st Century. This thesis offers an overview of the existing literature on Tongan history and military as well as an overview of contemporary literature that critiques militarization in the Pacific. Through a historical and critical lens, I examine the Tongan Military's participation in WWI, WWII, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), the U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the quelling of the 2006 Democracy Riots. Chapter one focuses on the establishment of Tonga as a British Protectorate, chapter two offers an account of Tonga's involvement in WWI, chapter three extends this account with an exploration of WWII, and chapter four offers a look at more contemporary engagements of the Tongan Military. By tracing the country's military, this thesis centers on exploring two main questions: for whom is the Tongan military fighting, and what impacts does Tongan participation in foreign military campaigns have on the island kingdom's sovereignty?

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Lastly, when I came to UH for my masters I was so very thrilled and inspired to go through the same program as Terasia Teaiwa. I never had the opportunity to meet her, but I am profoundly inspired by her work and I was devastated by her passing in 2017. Her passing as well as Tracey Banivanua-Mar’s reminded me of the pressure, stress, and hostility many femmes of color face within the academy. The untimely passing of such mana wahine stopped me in my tracks and made me reevaluate the importance of building meaningful supportive relationships with Pasifika femmes. My time here at UH was enriched exponentially by the brilliance and love of my friends, who supported me during late nights of writing, directed me towards better sources and ideas, and helped me laugh when all I could think about was the devastating impact of militarization. I am forever grateful to: Patricia Tupou, Rex Halafihi, Lee Kava, Elyssa Santos, Terava Casey, and Ami Mulligan, without whom I would be lost, academically, emotionally, and spiritually.

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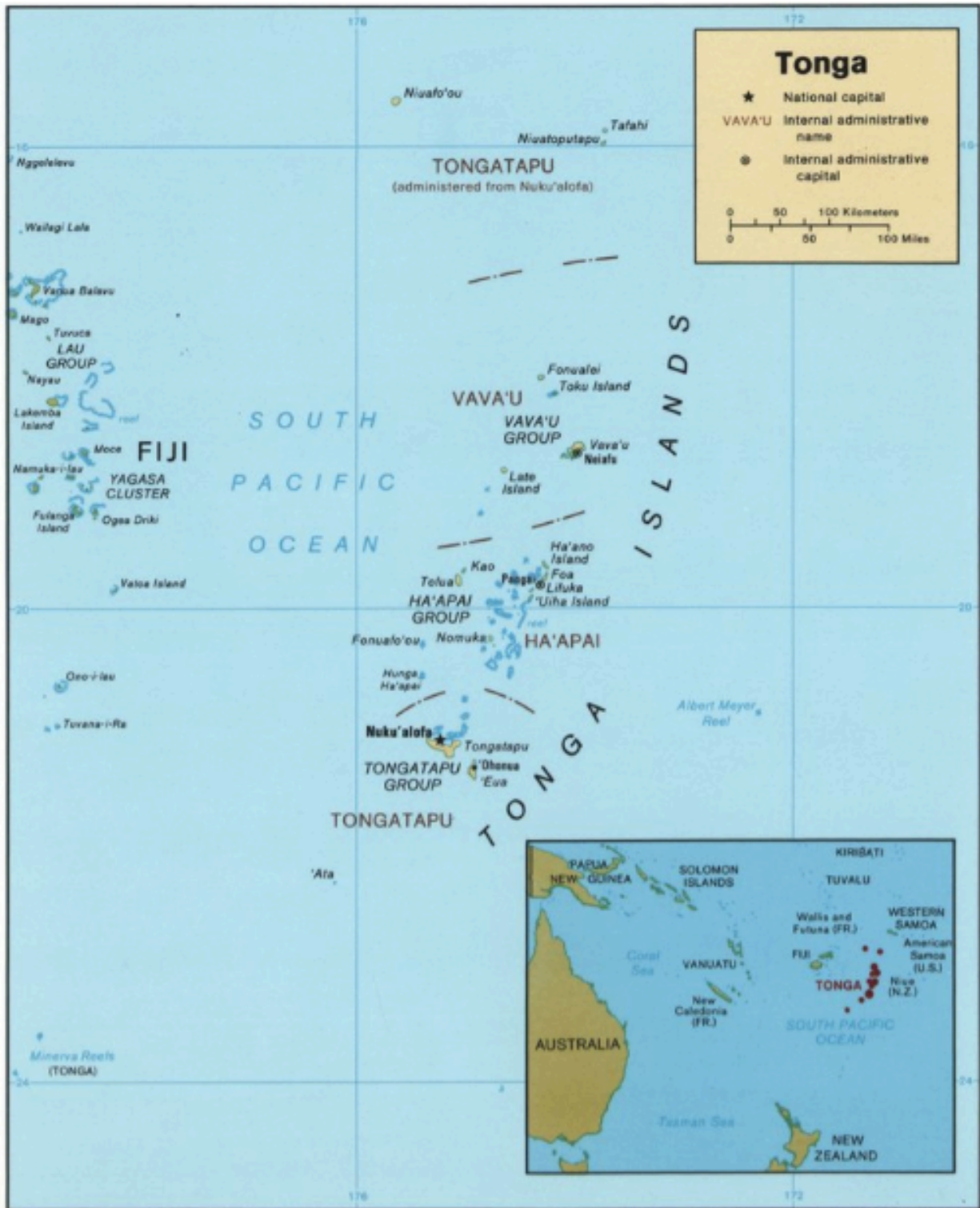


Fig. 1 Map of Tonga.

Introduction

With Our Eyes on the Past

The trip between Tongatapu and ‘Eua is notoriously rough. The strait between the two islands is short, but the depth of the channel causes a powerful and stomach curling current. The ‘*Onemato* ferry travels this route daily. It is a three-story passenger ship, with a long front deck and a smaller tower of passenger seating. Most passengers are families and workers who frequently ride on the rocky ‘*Onemato*. Those who are especially prepared bring sugar cane to sweeten the trip. However, I was entirely unprepared. Much to the amusement of the older men on the ship, I could barely manage to sit up straight as we swayed back and forth and up and down.¹

They say you should watch the horizon if you are seasick. To the best of my abilities, I fixed my eyes on the horizon and watched the bow roll in circles as the current whipped back and forth. An hour into our journey, I noticed a large gray ship in the distance. Next to the ship was a helicopter dipping towards the water. It was an Australian naval ship on a training mission with the Tongan military, currently named His Majesty’s Armed Forces. I was too paralyzed with nausea to run to the rail and take a closer look. Instead, I stayed seated on the damp floor of the old ferry, leaning against a cage of taro watching as our tiny, shaky, rusty boat, passed by the pristine Australian naval ship sitting firmly on the water’s surface. It stuck me how sturdily the naval ship sat, unmoving and massive in the great current, and it struck me how a ship like the ‘*Onemato*, one that is used every day by Tonga families and workers was in such poor condition compared to the gray behemoth sitting in the water.

Being confronted so vividly with the increased military presence in Tonga, in the waters of my ancestors, I thought back to when I first visited Tonga in 2004 as a teenager. I do not remember military personnel walking around like they were in the summer of 2018 when I most recently visited. As I observed the soldiers in full uniform, strolling along streets of Nuku’alofa in the 80 ° degree heat, I tried desperately to remember if they had been there before.² The school

¹ This reflection is from my trip to Tongatapu in July of 2018.

² I asked my family if they remembered seeing many soldiers in Nuku’alofa in 2004, and they agreed that there weren’t any. The increased presence was most likely due to the training session I describe, and the fact that Tonga has expanded its military efforts since 2004. In 2004 Tonga

children in their uniforms rushed swiftly across the busy streets and shopkeepers fanned themselves without flinching as the soldiers walked by. Seeing the military training exercise that day reminded me of the entanglements of empire at play in the Pacific. Many are unaware of and/or indifferent to Tonga's participation in the militarization of the region. While my thesis asks how Tonga's participation in U.S., UK, and Australian military campaigns further enfold them into the arms of empire, Tonga's occlusions from military discourse underwrites this enquiry. As Tonga has long been excluded from de-colonial and anti-militarization discourse due to its perceived contiguous sovereignty, I argue that Tonga is not disjointed and cannot be easily disarticulated from the tides of imperialism and militarization that have stormed the Pacific for over a century.³ Exploring the ways in which the Tongan military contributes to the campaigns of the U.S., U.K., and Australia demonstrates how Tonga has become involved in the most violent and colonial aspects of empire. This incorporation did not happen overnight but took over a century to solidify. A brief history of Tonga's military from the establishment of the monarchy to the present shows that Tonga has been affected by militarism and offers insights into militarism's ramification in Tonga; this history also illuminates the potential risks Tonga faces if the country continues to contract its military out to foreign powers.

Throughout my thesis I explore the creation of the modern Tongan nation-state under the Tupou dynasty, Tongan participation in World War One (WWI) and World War Two (WWII,) and the Tongan military's contemporary engagements. Beyond Tonga's geographic and genealogical connection with the broader Pacific, historical evidence shows that Tonga has not entirely escaped militarization's edge as many have assumed. My critiques are engaged in understanding the macro-politics of militarization and imperialism, which are not intended to dismiss, mask, or castigate the agency of individual Tongan soldiers or politicians who have chosen of their own volition to participate in the Tongan military. However, I do question how these individual's decisions and accomplishments would have manifested otherwise if the current frameworks of imperialism and militarization did not exist.

sent its first security force to Iraq in support of the U.S. invasion. The Democracy Riots that required military intervention did not occur until 2006.

³ Teresia Teaiwa, "The Articulated Limb: Theorizing indigenous Pacific participation in the Military Industrial Complex," *Pacific Dynamics: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research* 1, no.1 (2017): 1-20, 16.

Positionality

Before delving into the historical context of Tonga's military, I would first like to address the vantage point from which I am writing. I am a half-white (*palangi*) half-Tongan, *hafekasi*, woman living and writing in the U.S. My particular perspective has been deeply informed by my experiences. My interest is peaked by militarism in Tonga, in part because I am an outsider looking in. Although I am ethnically Tongan, I have never lived in the kingdom, and I have never personally experienced the economic, patriotic, and cultural conditions that compel the Tongan soldiers who enlist. Inevitably, some of my questions and conclusions are Americentric, or, at the very least, focused on how external and larger powers have affected Tongan politics rather than vice versa. Originally, I intended to write a thesis historicizing the contemporary Tongan diaspora to the U.S., but during my research I learned about the U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII and the dramatic and transformative impact the occupation had on the Tongan economy and global perspective. Additionally, after learning that the Tongan diaspora began after WWII, I could not ignore that Tonga, too, was part of the larger process of Pacific militarization. Further, I learned that Tongans not only participated in WWII, but in WWI as well. This information surprised me, because Tonga is often excluded from discussions of militarization in the Pacific due to its continued domestic sovereignty. Living and studying in Hawai'i, I am in constant contact with the realities of U.S. militarization and colonialism in the Pacific, and I could not un-see the negative cultural and environmental ramifications caused by the U.S. military here in Hawai'i. As a settler, I acknowledge that I am a participant in legitimizing this militarism by living and benefitting from the U.S. settler colonial system. In his foundational text on critiques of settler colonialism, Patrick Wolfe explains that "settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event."⁴ Part of such a structure is maintained by the complicit actions of Tonga's militarized relationship with the U.S., New Zealand, and Australia. Therefore, from this position, I am interested in critiquing the mechanism of militarism in the Pacific, specifically in Tonga, and Tonga's complicity in foreign military campaigns.

Despite my dislocation from Tonga, I am immensely proud of my heritage and Tonga's independence, and I am weary of foreign policy that could jeopardize the independence that my

⁴ Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387-409, 388.

ancestors worked so hard to protect. Moreover, I do not believe that the sovereignty of Pacific nations can be disarticulated from one another.⁵ By forming military alliances with the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand, the Tongan government is complicit in undermining indigenous sovereignty by supporting settler states and validating their militaries.⁶ Not only is this problematic in itself, but by formally, or tacitly, condoning imperialism in the Pacific, via these militarized relationships, the Tongan government limits its own sovereignty. This is because they are supporting powers that oppress Tonga's historical allies.⁷ Additionally, the aid Tonga receives from foreign governments in exchange for military service affects Tongan foreign policy in a way that favors militarized and monetarily dependent relationships with colonial powers.

While the full depth and breadth of the critical militarism-settler-colonial discourse is not the focus of this paper, I hope that my findings and analyses can contribute to this larger conversation. The primary sources I have gathered and have had access to are all in English; the *Tongan Government Gazette*, the various Tongan law codes, and the letters between Tupou II and the Western Pacific High Commission were written in both Tongan and English. I reviewed both versions of texts to the best of my ability but based my analyses on the English scripts. Beyond the *Government Gazette* and the Tongan law codes, I also had the privilege of being able to visit the Western Pacific Archive at the University of Auckland. With the help of the wonderful archivist Kathrine Pawley, I was able to view important correspondences between the Western Pacific High Commission and Tupou II, as well as documents on the status of German residents in Tonga during WWI. The wealth of primary sources concerning Tonga's military are not at the University of Hawai'i, but rather reside in Auckland, Wellington, and Canberra. Due to my limited access to primary sources on the subject, much of my thesis utilizes secondary sources. I have used a varied selection of secondary sources to construct the broader narrative of the creation of the Tongan monarchy, military, and Tonga's political state during WWI and WWII. I incorporate primary sources such as speeches and correspondences by the reigning

⁵ Teaiwa, "The Articulated Limb," 16.

⁶ Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 390. Settler states are founded upon the displacement and disempowerment of indigenous people, so that settler colonies have access to indigenous land which allows them to thrive and "replace" the existing indigenous society.

⁷ Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands," *The Contemporary Pacific* 6, no.1 (1994):148-161, 154.

monarch, personal military files, and newspaper articles to enhance my own analysis of the context in which the Tongan military and government was functioning.

While I employ many secondary sources, there are no existing texts that specifically address the Tongan military and its involvement in both the World Wars and Tonga's contemporary military engagements. Therefore, the information I am presenting, and interpreting is not new, but the compilation of it into one cohesive narrative and a close look at the Tongan military is unique. My thesis has a basic structure of six parts. This introduction includes my positionality and historiography. Chapter 1 addresses the creation of the monarchy and events that led up to Tonga becoming a British protectorate. Chapter 2 explores the political climate of Tonga on the verge of WWI and Tongan participation in the conflict. Chapter 3 houses a discussion on WWII which includes Tongan soldiers and fundraising efforts, and Chapter 4 explores contemporary military engagements after Tongan independence in 1970. Finally, I provide a brief conclusion that summarizes the chapters and provides a personal reflection on my findings. The following is an account of the most informative and influential secondary sources that have shaped my thesis.

Historiography

Academic interest in Tonga is frequently limited to anthropological accounts of island culture, and fiscal analyses of small island economies. However, there are a few historical texts on Tonga that dominate the field. First and foremost, there is Sione Lātūkefu's *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development*; then there is *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* by Ian Campbell, and *Friendly Islands: A history of Tonga* which is an anthology edited by Noel Rutherford. Each work offers a different look into Tonga's past, but none offers a critical analysis on the role of European imperialism's lasting impact on the role of the Tongan military. Another relevant text is *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga*, by Noel Rutherford. *Shirley Baker* closely follows the life and influence of one of Tupou I's most powerful advisors and the early political relationship between Britain and Tonga. Along the same vein, *Imperial Benevolence* by Jane Samson tracks the changing attitudes of British imperialism in the Pacific from the late 18th century up to the creation of the Western Pacific High Commission in 1877. Lastly, Elizabeth Wood-Ellem's biography *Queen Sālote of Tonga*:

The Story of an Era 1900-1965, beautifully recounts the late queen's life and the various political and personal challenges she faced.

There are a fair number of books on Pacific militarization, but few of them address Tonga specifically. The three most influential books on militarization that inform this thesis are: Teresia Teaiwa's dissertation "Militarism, Tourism, and the Native: Articulations in Oceania," *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and in the Pacific* edited by Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho, , and lastly Shasha Davis' *Empires' Edge: Militarization, Resistance and Transcending Hegemony in the Pacific*. In addition to these texts, Teaiwa's article, "The Articulated Limb: Theorizing indigenous Pacific participation in the Military Industrial Complex," has deeply impacted my understanding of Tongan motivations for participating in foreign military campaigns. None of the above titles specifically address Tonga's place in the militarization of the Pacific, but rather they provide a theoretical framework from which to understand why Tonga's participation in foreign sponsored global military engagements is problematic.

Finally, the third, and rarest, category are books and articles that directly address the Tongan military. Neither *Valiant Volunteers: Soldiers from Tonga in the Great War* by Christine Liava'a nor Judith Hornabrook's dissertation "New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force, 1939-1945" provide critical analysis on the significance of Tongan participation in WWI or WWII, but they both include detailed information on Tonga during these periods that is not available elsewhere. "The United States Occupation of Tonga, 1942-1945" by Charles Weeks and *Echoes of Pacific War* edited by Deryck Scarr, Niel Gunson, and Jennifer Terrell are much more forthcoming in their critiques of the positive and negatives impacts WWII had on Tonga. My work can be distinguished from these previous pieces, in that I discuss how the Tongan government responded differently in WWI compared to WWII. Additionally, I explore contemporary Tongan military engagements and their relationship to Tonga's past and question the impact these campaigns could have on Tonga's future.

i. Tonga

As aforementioned, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and political development, 1822-1875*, by Sione Lātūkefu, a celebrated Tongan scholar and Methodist pastor, is an incredibly important text on Tongan history. Lātūkefu gives a detailed

account of early Wesleyan Missionary influence in Tonga and of the consolidation of Tonga under Tāufa‘āhau (Siaosi/George) Tupou I. *Church and State in Tonga* does not cover the war years, which are the general focus of my thesis, but provides vital background to Tongan politics. The chapters are organized chronologically, and Lātūkefu uses a variety of sources; however, the majority of them are missionary accounts. Lātūkefu portrays Wesleyan missionaries exceedingly favorably. He describes Siaosi Tupou I’s destruction of indigenous religion remorselessly, and he praises the collapse of traditional Tongan governance. Despite his support of the missionaries’ and Tupou I’s destructive practices, Lātūkefu’s work is undoubtedly insightful and an invaluable examination of the Tongan Monarchy and its relationship to the Wesleyan Church.

Chapter One and Two describe the traditional religion and system of governance in Tonga, and the initial failed missionary attempt in the late 1700s. Lātūkefu gives careful descriptions of the more violent aspects of indigenous polity in Tonga, including finger amputation, human sacrifice, war, and the absolute power of chiefs over their subjects.⁸ The late 1700s proved to be a time of great civil unrest in Tonga and the introduction of guns escalated warfare rapidly.⁹ Lātūkefu attributes the early missionaries’ failure to their lack of skill and tact as well as chiefly greed that was invested in maintaining traditional order.¹⁰ There is no discussion of the benefits of communal modes of production or the advantageous intimacy between traditional Tongan religion and the environment. From Lātūkefu’s focus on the more violent and draconian aspects of Tongan culture, it is clear that he does not view pre-Christian Tonga positively. Lātūkefu’s praise of the early missionaries to Tonga belies the detrimental ramifications of adopting Christianity and creating a government modeled from European values and the impacts that it had on Tongan culture. There were both positive and negative consequences to supplementing Tongan traditional sovereignty with a European form.

The first king of Tonga, Tāufa‘āhau Tupou I, converted to Christianity in 1828, and used his newfound faith to dismantle traditional religion and undermine the chiefly powers supported by indigenous religion in order to consolidate Tonga under his rule.¹¹ Lātūkefu presents Tāufa‘āhau’s conversion and subsequent rampage against traditional Tongan religion as part of

⁸ Sione Lātūkefu, *Church and State in Tonga: The Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries and Political Development, 1822-1875* (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1974), 26-29.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 103-109.

an inevitable progression embedded in a longstanding power struggle between various chiefly lines.¹² Tāufa‘āhau and his followers burned temples, deposed priests and priestesses, and killed many who opposed him and his new religion.¹³ Lātūkefu himself describes Tāufa‘āhau’s efforts as fighting against “heathens.” Simply because Tāufa‘āhau was Tongan does not mean that his violence against Tongan culture was not at least partially a product of European imperialism in the Pacific.

Wesleyan excitement for Tāufa‘āhau’s war of attrition is evident in their enthusiastic allusions to crusades in their descriptions.¹⁴ Any doubts as to how much influence missionaries had on Tāufa‘āhau’s methods should be disabused by the code of laws erected by him in 1839 which disrupted many aspects of traditional Tongan culture, but most egregiously made dancing and traditional games illegal.¹⁵ European faith and polity was forcibly impressed on Tonga, which is evident in the brutality to which Tāufa‘āhau carried out his conquest and evident in the widespread dissatisfaction exhibited in the rebellions that ardently opposed these changes.¹⁶

Once the rebellions were suppressed, and the majority of Tongans accepted Methodism or Catholicism, Tāufa‘āhau focused his efforts on securing Tongan independence by adopting a constitution that would be internationally recognized.¹⁷ Despite Tāufa‘āhau’s violence against Tongan tradition, and his willingness to convert to European religion and governance, he was unwilling to sell outsiders land.¹⁸ This protected Tonga from the insidious planters that plagued other island nations. Additionally, Tāufa‘āhau assumed a constitutional monarchy, similar to that of Hawai’i, which gained recognition of foreign governments and ultimately shielded Tonga from growing imperial powers.¹⁹ The protection of Tongan sovereignty should be celebrated, but

¹² *Ibid.*, 105.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 164.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 224.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 231; Jane Samson, *Imperial Benevolence: Making British Authority in the Pacific Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 70. Those who supported the Tu’i Tonga, Laufilitonga, adopted Catholicism. Additionally, while Tupou I gained the support of Wesleyan British missionaries, those who opposed Tupou I and converted to Catholicism gained the support of Catholic French missionaries. In this way Tongans used the competition between imperial powers to their own political advantages.

¹⁸ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 253.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 312

continued independence came at a cost that cannot be ignored or justified as part of a natural progression. The irony of Tongan sovereignty is that in order to maintain their self-determination, Tongans still had to adopt European standards of government, education, and cosmology. *Church and State in Tonga* continues to be the best existing history on the creation of the Tongan monarchy, and the role of missionaries in Tongan state formation. However, Lātūkefu does not adequately critique Tāufa‘āhau’s decisions to eradicate traditional Tongan religion, and the longer-term ramifications that the decision has had on Tongan culture.

Lātūkefu’s work is concentrated on a narrow time frame, 1822-1875, which allows him to be detailed and nuanced, but the standard text on Tongan history is *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* by Ian Campbell. Campbell provides a general overview of Tongan history from its first settlement to 1990. The first six chapters cover the same time periods and events as *Church and State in Tonga* and come to the same conclusions as Sione Lātūkefu. However, the chapters provide less detail since ancient Tongan polity and the foundation of the monarchy are only part of the book’s focus. While Lātūkefu is complimentary towards British missionaries and influence, he also vehemently touts the political genius of Tongan leaders, but Campbell is more focused on the importance of external influence. Campbell praises British interference in Tonga and hypothesizes that “without the periodic intervention and advice of the British consul, it is doubtful that the Tupou dynasty would have survived the troubled early decades of the twentieth century.”²⁰ However, Campbell cites no sources to corroborate his supposition. He also freely expresses his disapproval of Tupou II. In one instance he explains that the 1905 Supplementary Agreement was necessary and that “the king had brought humiliation on himself by his own carelessness of the need for good government and disregard for the constitution.”²¹

In later chapters, he continues to focus on the relationship between Britain and Tonga and on the broad economic and political changes of each decade. Since Campbell is not specifically concerned with the Tongan military, *Island Kingdom* only minimally addresses Tongan involvement in WWI and WWII. Campbell spends more time castigating Tupou II than addressing the kingdom’s response to WWI. He does not discuss how WWI forced Tonga to

²⁰Ian Campbell, *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press, 1992), 113.

²¹*Ibid.*, 116. In 1901 Tonga became a protectorate of Britain, against Tupou II’s wishes (see Chapter 2.) The 1905 Supplementary Agreement even further increased the power of British officials in the Tongan government.

fully shift its alliance away from Germany and toward Britain. During the early period of Tongan independence, 1875 to 1900, Germany had been one of Tonga's primary allies. Instead he focuses on the economic ramifications WWI had on Tonga. While the price of copra was high due to increased demand, the war stifled shipping in the Pacific, so the Tongan economy did not benefit from the elevated price.²² Campbell skims over WWI, but he provides a slightly deeper look into WWII. Campbell emphasizes the importance of the U.S. occupation of Tonga during the war, and the cultural and economic ramifications of the occupation rather than the contributions of Tongan soldiers.²³ Despite some of Campbell's analyses that favor British intervention, *Island Kingdom* continues to be a vital text in the historiography of Tonga.

So too is *Friendly Islands: A history of Tonga* which is an anthology edited by Noel Rutherford, which covers similar time frames as Lātūkefu and Campbell, but offers interpretations of the Tongan past from a variety of scholars. *Friendly Islands* includes a chapter by Lātūkefu titled "The Wesleyan Mission," which concisely summarizes his main points in his book *Church and State in Tonga*. While the collection does not directly address the Tongan military, it is worth noting, especially for what it offers in terms of early Tongan history. An especially useful chapter is "Oral Traditions and Prehistory," as told to Noel Rutherford by Ve'ehala and Tupou Posesi Fanua, that offers a better and more narrative-driven account of ancient Tongan polity than *Church and State* and *Friendly Islands*. Additionally, the collection includes chapters written by Elizabeth Wood-Ellem and Noel Rutherford, on topics that they have each written books about- Queen Sālote and Shirley Baker, respectively.

One of the most important arguments Lātūkefu makes is that missionaries had a significant influence on Tongan politics, but there was a limit to the missionaries' power. One missionary who is often credited for ensuring Tongan independence is Shirley Baker, who is the focus of Noel Rutherford's book *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga* (1996.) Baker was originally sent to Tonga as a Wesleyan missionary 1860 and remained in Tonga until he was deported by the Western Pacific High Commission in 1890.²⁴ During his time in Tonga, Baker became a close ally and political advisor to Tupou I, much to the ire of the Wesleyan mission.

²² *Ibid.*, 122.

²³ *Ibid.*, 156-167.

²⁴ Noel Rutherford, *Shirley Baker and The King of Tonga* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996), 89.

Baker helped the King construct various law codes and prompted the establishment of the Free Church of Tonga, which is still the official religion of Tonga to this day. Rutherford decided to take a closer look at the role of Shirley Baker in the formation of the Tongan nation-state, after most historical pieces had based their interpretations of Baker on the writings of Basil Thomson. Thomson was a British official who despised Baker and depicted him as a zealous lunatic, interested in manipulating Tupou I in order to aggrandize himself.²⁵ However, according to Rutherford and Lātūkefu he was not as selfish as Thomson portrayed him to be. Additionally, his influence on Tupou I was more limited than Thomson claimed. *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga* is an important piece for understanding the formation of the Tongan monarchy and the early relationship between Britain and Tonga. Many of the early conflicts between the two nations arose, because of Baker's influence and mis/guidance.

Another useful text for conceptualizing British influence during the early years of the Tongan Monarchy is *Imperial Benevolence* (1998) by Jane Samson. It is less focused on missionary involvement and more concerned with British naval motives in the Pacific. Samson argues that in the early-to mid-19th century the ideology behind British involvement in the Pacific was informed by Christian, liberal, and paternalistic ideals that were part of the abolition movement and evangelical revivalism.²⁶ Although the text is not solely focused on Tonga, Samson's chapter "Kingmaking," explores the British navy and missionaries' influence in Tonga. While some of Samson's conclusions pay too much credence to the power of the British navy, her arguments align with my analysis that European notions of sovereignty and legitimacy of power deeply informed the creation of the monarchy.

Samson illuminates the close relationship between the British Navy and Wesleyan missionaries during this period. One particularly notable instance that illustrates the close association between Tāufa'āhau, British missionaries, and the British Navy, was the battle of 1840 at Pea. The British Naval officer, Walter Croker joined forces with Tāufa'āhau against the Ha'a Havea Chiefs (very briefly; who were the Ha'a havea Chiefs?). The attack was unsuccessful, and Croker died during battle. However, his reckless support of Tāufa'āhau represented the British Navy's commitment to assisting and protecting the missionaries, and by association Tāufa'āhau. Although Croker's actions were an exception to the norm,

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁶ Samson, *Imperial Benevolence*, 11.

correspondences between missionaries, naval officers, and the British government regularly referenced Tāufa‘āhau as the king of Tonga well before he had officially consolidated monarchal power in 1875.²⁷ The alliance between missionaries, the monarchy, and the British Navy show how entrenched militarism has been in Tonga and its links to Tongan sovereignty. While Samson’s work is useful for understanding British reasoning behind imperialism in the Pacific, she ultimately minimizes the negative impact that British imperialism had in the Pacific.

While *Shirley Baker and the King of Tonga* and *Imperial Benevolence* emphasize the significance of British influence, Elizabeth Wood-Ellem’s book *Queen Sālote of Tonga: The Story of an Era 1900-1965* (1999), focuses on one of Tonga’s most celebrated historical figures. Wood-Ellem wrote *Queen Sālote of Tonga* with permission and assistance from the royal family after the queen passed away. The monograph reflects Wood-Ellem’s respect and admiration for Queen Sālote and provides a detailed account of both her personal and political triumphs and challenges. In addition, the biography includes descriptions of the Queen’s reaction to WWII. On September 3, 1939, Tonga declared war on Germany. Queen Sālote called on her people to volunteer in support of the British and initiated the creation of the Tongan Defence Force (TDF).²⁸ The wartime was also a traumatic period in the Queen’s personal life. The Queen’s consort and Tonga’s Premier, Prince Tungī Mailefihi was made colonel-in-chief of the TDF, but Tungī suddenly died in 1941. The Queen was left to face the war as well as the American occupation of Tonga without her husband and closest political ally. Still, she and the Tongan people continued to be generous with their time, land, and resources.²⁹ For example, much of the Fua‘amotu airfield was built by hand and by volunteers. This airbase was highly desirable and remained in use throughout the war.³⁰ Queen Sālote’s firm commitment to the war effort starkly contrasted her father’s reaction to WWI. The difference in Tongan action between WWI and WWII reflects the changed political relationship between Tonga and Britain.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

²⁸ Elizabeth Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga: The Story of an Era, 1900-1965* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999), 192.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 195.

³⁰ Judith Hornabrook, “New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force” (Master’s Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1951), 48.

ii. *Militarization*

Examining the motivations for Tongan participation in international military campaigns, especially those that, from a geopolitical standpoint, do not threaten Tonga, is very complex. Those who choose to enlist do so for a variety of reasons including passion, patriotism, and economic gain. However, from a macro-perspective, the commitment of Tonga in such distant and dangerous affairs reveals the insidious nature of militarization and its particular articulations in a nation that was never formally colonized. Teaiwa's dissertation and body of work on militarization has profoundly impacted Pacific Island Studies, militarism studies, and the discourse of decolonization. Teaiwa's dissertation "Militarism, Tourism, and the Native: Articulations in Oceania" examines the intersections of culture, gender, militarism and tourism. Teaiwa critiques militarization without negating the "attraction and usefulness to indigenous peoples."³¹ Further, Teaiwa uses the framework of articulation in order to better represent the ways in which militarism affects indigenous communities as well as how militarism is shaped by indigenous practices and perceptions.³² Teaiwa uses the idea of articulation, based on Stuart Hall's analysis of societal power structures that are formed and informed by multiple forces including politics and culture, because it allows for "layers upon layers of contextualization...and of more accurately representing cultural and political complexity."³³ Tonga's unique politics and culture shape militarism's impact on Tonga and, in turn shape the militarized relationships between Tonga and the U.S., the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

Although "Militarism, Tourism, and the Native" is predominately concerned with Fiji, as Teaiwa notes, her approaches and analyses are relevant to Tonga as well. Tonga's military is similar to Fiji's in that it is funded by external powers and is used to serve U.S., British, and Australian agendas despite the fact that Tonga is independent. While the military provides a means of economic and social mobility and has cultural appeal in Fiji and Tonga, indigenous participation in imperial agendas is no less destructive. Teaiwa argues that overseas funding of the Fijian military "privilege[s] state-to-state relationships with Indonesia, France, New Zealand, and Australia, [thus] Fiji foregoes an opportunity to build meaningful relationships directly with

³¹ Teaiwa, *Militarism, Tourism, and the Native*, 98.

³² *Ibid.*, 32.

³³ *Ibid.*, 4.

the indigenous people of West Papua, East Timor, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Australia, and New Zealand.”³⁴ The same conclusions can be made concerning Tonga’s continued participation in global military campaigns, which I will argue in my thesis by discussing Tonga’s involvement in WWI, WWII, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI,) and the U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and in the Pacific edited by Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho is a collection of radical anti-imperial scholarship, focused on militarization’s impacts on gender, politics, and culture in the Pacific and the Pacific Rim. The purpose of the authors’ critiques is to address militarism as an extension of colonialism and a continuation of imperial trauma. Along with militarism’s impacts, *Militarized Currents* also questions the motivations behind indigenous participation in the U.S. military. The authors’ investigations into indigenous complicity reflect my interest in why Tonga chooses to support Australian, U.S. and British military campaigns.

The personal and cultural trauma of militarization is explored in Jon Osorio’s opening chapter “Memorializing Pu‘uloa and Remembering Pearl Harbor.” He demonstrates how U.S. militarization and glorification of WWII has masked the indigenous histories of spaces such as Pu‘uloa (the indigenous name for Pearl Harbor). Osorio explains the changing sentiments towards Pu‘uloa across four generations and explains the effects that militarism and U.S. patriotism have had on Hawaiian culture and perspective. Osorio also argues that the extensive military buildup of Hawai‘i is a strategic act by the U.S. government to divert attacks from the continental U.S. and towards Hawai‘i.³⁵ WWII also significantly altered the geographies of Tonga, with bases and airfields constructed on previously sacred land. War’s impact on geographies and memory is a hallmark of militarization.

Similarly, “The Exceptional Life and Death of a Chamorro Soldier,” by Michael Lujan Bevacqua pushes back against increased U.S. militarization of Guam post 9/11, and against his

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

³⁵ John Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, “Memorializing Pu‘uloa and Remembering Pearl Harbor,” in *Militarized Currents*, eds. Setsu Shigematsu and Keith Camacho (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 13.

community's popular belief that the military is a positive influence in Guam.³⁶ Bevacqua also discusses the widespread feelings of indebtedness to the U.S. and the U.S. infantilizing of Chamorros. He shows how these imposed feelings of indebtedness and inferiority play into Guam's record high recruitment rates.³⁷ Bevacqua offers a few solutions: to rethink Chamorro notions of indebtedness and instead celebrate Chamorros who refused to fight alongside the U.S. during WWII and to encourage families to stop their children from joining the military.³⁸ Notions of indebtedness and vulnerability strongly influenced the creation of the Tongan military in WWII, when Tongans enlisted in mass to support Great Britain.³⁹

Vernadette Gonzales also addresses the effects of militarism on culture in her chapter, "Touring Military Masculinities," where she explores mili-tourism in the Philippines at Corregidor, Bataan, Subic Bay, and Clark.⁴⁰ She explains how the celebratory military tours of Corregidor and Bataan focus on American valor and bravery, and represent the U.S. military as saviors while completely neglecting the atrocities of the U.S.-Philippine war and the brutality of the nearly 50 years of U.S. imperialism that followed.⁴¹ This distortion of history humors "imperial nostalgia" and justifies the continued and unequal relationship between the U.S. and the Philippines.⁴² Militarism's manipulations of memory and the lucrativeness of service create a toxic and unequal relationship between indigenous soldiers and imperial powers. Critiquing Tongan involvement in foreign military campaigns is essential in combatting empiricist narratives that fuel "imperial nostalgia" by not questioning the impact that militarism has had on the political health of Tonga and the broader Pacific.

Empires' Edge: Militarization Resistance, and Transcending Hegemony in the Pacific (2010) by Sasha Davis focuses on American Empire in the Pacific, and the means by which the

³⁶ Michael Lujan Bevacqua, "The Exceptional Life and Death of a Chamorro Soldier," in *Militarized Currents*, eds. Setsu Shigematsu and Keith Camacho (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 36, 40.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

³⁹ Elizabeth Wood-Ellem "Behind the Battle Lines: Tonga in World War II," in *Echoes of Pacific War*, eds. Deryck Scarr, Niel Gunson, Jennifer Terrell, and Tongan History Conference (Canberra: Target Oceania, 1998), 4.

⁴⁰ Vernadette Gonzales, "Touring Military Masculinities," in *Militarized Currents*, eds. Setsu Shigematsu and Keith Camacho (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 64.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 68, 79.

U.S. maintains hegemony in the region via militarization. Much of Davis' analyses rely upon his understanding of the relationship between China and the United States. China is both the U.S.'s largest trading partner and the U.S.'s main competitor in global hegemony. He argues that to conceptualize U.S. military posturing in the Pacific, it is best to understand it as a means to defend "vital systems" rather than "defending territory and perpetuating the state against opposition."⁴³ Since the Pacific is a "critical space of a transnational economic system," the U.S. is compelled to protect it due to the state's reliance on "capitalist accumulation and neoliberal trade policies."⁴⁴ Having a strong military presence in the region allows the U.S. to dictate trade and defend " 'the system' from all threats, environmental, military, and political."⁴⁵

The U.S. is not the main military influence in Tonga, although the U.S. military did occupy Tonga during WWII. The primary foreign military presence in Tonga is Australia, which Davis categorizes as one of many U.S. allies that value U.S. hegemony.⁴⁶ Understanding U.S., Australian, and British alliances in this way explains why Tonga has seamlessly gone from supporting each state in various military engagements. It also helps rationalize why part of Australia's response to post-9/11 U.S. foreign policy resulted in increased military presence in the Pacific, which the Tongan military supported. Tonga's role in contemporary military engagements and Tonga's strong relationship with China will be explored later in this thesis.

Chapter 3 in *Empire's Edge*, "Seeing like an Empire: Islands as Wastelands," is also valuable when considering British policy towards Tonga. Davis outlines America's rationalization of the bombing of Bikini Atoll. He explores the colonial rhetoric of "disposability" which is constructed around "place-myths" which represent a space in a way that aligns with colonial state interests rather than on the lived experience of the people who call the area home.⁴⁷ This practice is relevant to the Pacific more broadly, since the dominant representations of Pacific islands are as travel destinations with little to offer beyond vacation oases for elites. The second common representation of the Pacific is as a blank space and only of interest for trade between Asia and America. This representational erasure allows the U.S. and

⁴³ Sasha Davis, *Empires' Edge: Militarization Resistance, and Transcending Hegemony in the Pacific*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015), 14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

Australia to continue to militarize the Pacific without external critique. “Place-myth” is directly relevant to Tonga, in that colonial powers have continuously characterized Tonga as irrelevant and resource poor while simultaneously insisting on having control over Tongan foreign policy. This narrative and consequence were especially prevalent during Tonga’s protectorate period from 1901-1970.

Davis’ insights complement Teaiwa’s critiques of the Global Military Industrial Complex in her 2017 article, "The Articulated Limb: Theorizing Indigenous Pacific Participation in the Military Industrial Complex." Their analyses illuminate the ways in which Tonga’s current military strategy acts as an extension empire. She positions militarized Pacific nations as being attached to the limbs of empire with militarization acting as the connecting joints. She questions how to disarticulate them and explores the motivations behind Fijian and Chamorro participation in U.S., British, and UN military and peacekeeping campaigns. She argues that in both instances notions of bravery, masculinity, and duty compel indigenous soldiers to support colonial powers.⁴⁸ The emotional and identity driven aspects of indigenous enlistment are further perpetuated by the profitability of service. Another important contribution Teaiwa’s article makes is that she continuously refers to militarization as part of the Global Military Industrial Complex or MIC. This title better connotes the amorphous and self-perpetuating mixture of violent foreign policy and the self-serving economics of war that causes the Pacific to be entrenched in the military strategies of Europe and the U.S. This characterization most closely matches my approach to militarism in Tonga, because it allows for conceptualizing how Tongan participation in foreign military campaigns is part of an imperial process despite Tonga’s political independence. Teaiwa’s usage of Hall’s “articulation” to also allude to physical joints even further portrays the intimacy and complexity of Pacific Islander soldier’s connection to militarization and how difficult disarticulation from the MIC would be. It also centers the physical and dangerous nature of combat. This complicated connectivity also explains how Tongan and other indigenous Pacific soldiers can willingly and pridefully participate in foreign military campaigns that are imperial in nature.

Militarized Currents, "The Articulated Limb," and *Militarism, Tourism, and the Native* are part of an exceptional branch of scholarship on militarization that both considers the value of

⁴⁸ Teaiwa, "The Articulated Limb," 16.

military service for indigenous persons while simultaneously highlighting the problematics of indigenous participation and the corrosive effects of militarism on indigenous sovereignty and culture. These works differ starkly from empirical military histories that fail to critique the violence of militarization and valorize indigenous participation and complicity with imperial militaries. Two texts specifically related to the Tongan military represent this type of scholarship: *Valiant Volunteers: Soldiers from Tonga in the Great War* by Christine Liava‘a and Judith Hornabrook’s dissertation “New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force, 1939-1945.” They are profoundly useful for the sources they utilize and the extent to which they acknowledge Tongan sacrifice. However, their lack of critique towards the Global Military Industrial Complex tacitly condones the origins and growth of militarization in the Pacific.

iii. *The Tongan Military*

Valiant Volunteers is not concerned with the political implications of Tonga’s participation during WWI. Instead, Liava‘a meticulously lists the 91 Tongan born volunteers who joined the British, New Zealand, and French forces; she also provides bibliographic excerpts for each volunteer. Liava‘a’s intentions are simply to bring attention to the individual volunteers from Tonga. She does provide fascinating information on the various soldiers. For example, she provides a detailed account of Sione Taliauli, who was a doctor in training in New Zealand when he decided to enlist in 1915. Taliauli served and died in Palestine and is buried in a cemetery near Jaffa.⁴⁹ *Valiant Volunteers* is not only useful from a research perspective, but relevant to family members of those who served. It also mentions British anxieties about German citizens living in Tonga but fails to discuss the deeper historical context of the two powers previously vying for control of Tonga. The book also ignores the political tensions that had been rising between Tonga and Britain in the decade prior to WWI. This is most likely due to the fact that it is not an academic text published through a university press.

In 1900 Britain pressured Tupou II into signing a protectorate agreement after his government had amassed significant debt to a major German trading firm. Britain felt that if Germany were to control the valuable Vava‘u port, it would challenge British hegemony in the

⁴⁹ Christine Liava‘a, *Koe Kau To‘a Na‘anau Poletau Valiant Volunteers: Soldiers from Tonga in the Great War* (Auckland: Polygraphia, 2011), 12.

region.⁵⁰ Again in 1905, Britain added the Supplementary Agreement that required the Tongan government to receive British approval for major financial decisions and significant government appointments.⁵¹ As detailed in Noel Rutherford's article "Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha: A Proto-Co-operative in Tonga," in 1911 the British consul William Telfer Campbell, with assistance from the British backed Premier Mateialona, significantly overreached his authority.⁵² Campbell and Mateialona disbanded and liquidated a Tongan copra co-operative, the Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha, which was designed to ensure Tongan growers received the same profit for their exports as Europeans. The controversy stoked animosity among Tongans against the British and Britain's growing influence in the Tongan government.

Although the final outcome of the Kautaha controversy actually tempered British power in Tonga, the tensions between the two countries lingered up to the advent of WWI, which came just four years after the scandal. My thesis will account for British and German encroachments on Tongan sovereignty and Tonga's reluctance to participate in WWI. It is in these intersections of struggles for self-determination and pressures to participate in global military campaigns the tension between Tongan sovereignty and militarism is most apparent.

Similar to *Valiant Volunteers, New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force* does not address the political motivations for Tonga's enthusiastic participation in WWII. Hornabrook's dissertation tracks the creation of the Tonga Defence Force under Queen Sālote, the infrastructure projects facilitated by the New Zealand Public Works Department, Tongan fundraising campaigns, and the U.S. occupation of Tonga. However, the text does not explain the differences in response to WWII compared to WWI or the implications of Tonga unquestioningly supporting the British. Although Hornabrook does not press strong political critiques, Hornabrook's work is still a valuable resource, and is a reference that Teaiwa cites in her dissertation. Additionally, it is the most extensive text solely dedicated to Tonga's military participation during WWII. As Hornabrook states in her introduction, her primary goal is to bring attention to the much-neglected efforts of Tonga and Tongan soldiers during WWII. She does so very successfully and in great detail; it is unfortunate that a text like *New Zealand and*

⁵⁰ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 111-114.

⁵¹ Noel Rutherford, "Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha: A Proto-Co-operative in Tonga," *The Journal of Pacific History* 16, no. 1 (1981): 20-41, 20.

⁵² Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 31.

the Tonga Defence Force has not been formally published. I believe that part of Tonga's relative exclusion from the discourse of de-colonization and anti-militarization partly stems from the politics of publishing that has disregarded the importance of published and widely accessible materials on Tonga and the Tongan military.

However, there are a few publications that both address the Tongan military and have a critical analysis of its functions and the effects of militarism in Tonga. An article that takes a more critical approach to WWII Tonga is "The United States Occupation of Tonga, 1942-1945," by Charles Weeks. The article describes the massive number of U.S. soldiers that poured into Tonga during WWII and acknowledges both the positive and negative aspects of the occupation. Weeks explains that the extensive investment the U.S. made in developing the Fua'amotu Airbase and the dramatic effects American cash had on the Tongan economy.⁵³ U.S. spending was advantageous to many, but it also caused shortages and in some cases U.S. soldiers used their wealth to encourage prostitution.⁵⁴ Weeks also thoroughly recounts the "Great Cigarette Raid," in which U.S. soldiers arrested forty Tongan men and accused them of stealing from the base.⁵⁵ The U.S. military clearly overstepped their authority, and even threatened declaring martial law due to the ordeal. The British consul reminded the U.S. that it would be beyond their jurisdiction to do so, but the incident demonstrated the U.S.'s disregard for Tongan rights and sovereignty.⁵⁶

Another collection, focused on WWII Tonga is *Echoes of Pacific War* edited by Deryck Scarr, Niel Gunson, and Jennifer Terrell. It is a compilation of papers presented at the 7th Tongan History Conference in 1997 and features a diverse array of papers concerning WWII and post-WWII Tonga that are mostly anthropological in nature. The first half of the collection is related to Tonga during and shortly after WWII while the second half is more concerned with contemporary Tonga and migration. The most conventionally historical essay is Elizabeth Wood-Ellem's "Behind the Battle Lines: Tonga in World War II," which summarizes Tongan actions at home and abroad during the war. The essay mirrors her chapter on WWII in her book, *Queen Sālote of Tonga: The Story of an Era 1900-1965*.

⁵³Charles J. Weeks, "The United States Occupation of Tonga, 1942-1945: The Social and Economic Impact," *Pacific Historical Review* 56, no. 3 (1987): 415.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 419.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 421.

Another important essay is “Changing Values and Changed Psychology” by Futa Helu. He argues the war fundamentally altered Tongan psyche towards a “capitalist psychology.”⁵⁷ He also credits the war with spurring Tongan emigration and the shift in Tongan education towards Euro-American curricula.⁵⁸ For example, in 1947 Prince Tungī banned Tongan language during school hours and schools no longer taught traditional gardening or handcrafts.⁵⁹ Helu views these changes as essential and positive, but I view these changes brought on by WWII as evidence of militarism’s imperial nature. Helu ascribes to the notion that a capitalist democracy is the teleological end of every nation’s political development. However, there are advantages to maintaining Tongan tradition especially in regard to language, crafts, gardening, and familial structure.

“Tonga and Australia Since World War II,” by Gareth Grainger notes that prior to WWII Tonga’s primary foreign relations were with New Zealand and Britain, but after WWII Australia has become one of Tonga’s premier allies.⁶⁰ Australian aid largely motivates the Tonga-Australia relationship; direct government to Tonga aid from Australia commenced in 1970, and eclipsed Britain and New Zealand in the early 1990s.⁶¹ Along with aid towards economic development, Australia has also become increasingly invested in the Tongan military. In 1988 Australia began training Tongan soldiers and supplying weaponry through the Defence Cooperation.⁶² Australia has also invested millions of dollars in developing Tonga’s harbors and its navy.⁶³ Tonga’s economic fragility and the lucrateness of service in alignment with Australia’s tightly binds the two nations and their militaries together.

Economic dependence on foreign defense partnerships further incorporates Tonga into the Global Military Industrial Complex, which is essentially an investment in violence and imperialism. As discussed earlier, it also privileges state-to-state relationships that undermine

⁵⁷ Futa Helu, “Changing Values and Changed Psychology,” in *Echoes of Pacific War*, eds. Deryck Scarr, Niel Gunson, Jennifer Terrell, and Tongan History Conference (Canberra: Target Oceania, 1998), 37.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁶⁰ Gareth Grainger, “Tonga and Australia Since World War II,” in *Echoes of Pacific War*, eds. Deryck Scarr, Niel Gunson, Jennifer Terrell, and Tongan History Conference (Canberra: Target Oceania, 1998), 65.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 69.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

indigenous claims to sovereignty. As an example, Teaiwa cites the Tongan military's participation in peacekeeping missions to Bougainville without consulting the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA).⁶⁴ The Tongan military favored Papua New Guinea and Australia's arguments against the Bougainville uprising, without acknowledging the inequities and pollution created by the Rio Tinto mining corporation that served as the catalyst to the rebellion.⁶⁵ Using Teaiwa's frameworks on militarization, I explore Tongan involvement in the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), which was an Australian backed "peace keeping mission" to the Solomon Islands from 2003-2017. I also question Tonga's involvement with the U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. I am interested in understanding the continuing effects of militarism in Tonga and its implications for Tongan sovereignty as well as broader indigenous Pacific sovereignty.

A century prior to WWII, imperialism in the Pacific was partially motivated by naval interests, but WWII and the Cold War accelerated foreign militarization of the Pacific. It intensified Euro-American investment in Pacific bases and indigenous armed forces. The Tongan military was originally intended to benefit foreign interests by participating in foreign wars, and its function has not changed. Every war the Tongan military has participated in has been in support of a foreign power. If a core tenet of sovereignty is having the sole authority to declare war, what are the implications of Tongan dependence on foreign defense aid and missions?

⁶⁴ Teaiwa, *Militarism, Tourism, and the Native*, 100.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Chapter I
A Fraught Friendship:
The Rise of the Monarchy and The Treaty of Friendship

It is strange to discuss Tonga as a new nation in the late 19th century, because although the political structure established under Tupou I was new and Tonga's place in the global political theater was new, Tonga itself was not new. The nascent monarchical structure of the government did not suppress or fully transform the importance of indigenous hierarchies and socio-political relationships. Although Tonga did experience a time of disunity leading up to Tupou I's takeover, the consolidation of the nation under King Tupou I was not the first time Tonga had been a politically cohesive unit. The Tongan Empire that existed from the 10th to 16th century is well beyond the scope of this paper, but it deserves to be acknowledged at least briefly, to dissuade any readers who are unfamiliar with Tonga's history from concluding that the unification of Tonga was purely a reaction to European colonialism in the Pacific. This matter and a detailed description of the creation of the Tongan nation state is better discussed in Sione Lātūkefu's *Church and State in Tonga*. My intentions are to analyze the modern Tongan military from its beginnings to the present, and the global political factors that may or may not have influenced Tonga's military decisions. In doing so I seek to question the boundaries of Tongan sovereignty, and the extent foreign powers have influenced and continue to influence Tongan independence. In this chapter I look specifically at how Tonga became a British protectorate and how this affected Tonga's participation in WWI.

Traditional Tongan Polity and Tupou I's Rise to Power

The creation of the Tongan nation-state took nearly a century, and greatly altered the power lines that were once the life force of the Tongan Empire. As aforementioned, this text is not a comprehensive look at all of Tongan history, but to understand the political climate in Tonga at the turn of the century, I will offer a brief and greatly simplified picture of Tupou I's rise to power and the structure of the traditional Tongan polity. Traditional Tongan polity was bound by tightly woven socio-religious ties between Tu'is, chiefs, and commoners. While there are many powerful and sacred titles, some of which continue to have power today, there are three lineages which had the most power in Tonga prior to the creation of the Monarchy. The oldest

and most sacred central unit of power was the Tu‘i Tonga. This position has existed at least since 950 CE, according to genealogic records. The source of the Tu‘i Tonga’s power, or his right to rule in sovereignty terms, is that he is a direct descendent of the premier Tongan deity Tangaloa ‘Eiki.¹ The second Tu‘i title was created in the 1400s; the Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua served as the secular (*hau*) ruler, while the Tu‘i Tonga remained the spiritual leader. Despite the loss of power for the Tu‘i Tonga title, its lineage continued to outrank that of the Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua. The right to rule for the Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua was derived from the person’s genealogic connections to the first Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua, Mo’ungamotu’a, who was the brother of Kau‘ulufonua Fekai, the 24th Tu‘i Tonga. In the early 1600s, the third Tu‘i title was created by the sixth Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua. This title was the Tu‘i Kanokupolu and it too was a temporal power. The Tu‘i Tonga title still outranked both *hau* titles. Traditional Tongan political power was both religious and hereditary. However, genealogy was not the only determinant of the person’s right to rule, especially as the generations of Tu‘is became further removed from the original ancestor. The sacredness of a person or their *tapu* status was entirely hereditary and immutable, but a person’s power or *mana* could be enhanced or diminished based on a person’s actions and their leadership abilities.² Therefore, to a limited extent, there was some flexibility to the succession of power, and the acquisition of chiefly titles was partially merit-based. While this flexibility helped ensure that the most qualified and highest-ranking person possessed the most power, it also allowed for ambiguities in succession lines, leaving the system vulnerable to chronic infighting over chiefly titles.

Such was the case in 1777 when an argument began between the Tu‘i Kanokupolu and Tu‘i Tonga lineage over who the successor for the Tu‘i Kanokupolu title should be. Tuku‘aho, of the Tu‘i Kanokupolu lineage and the leading chief of ‘Eua, triumphed over his cousins for the right to the Tu‘i Kanokupolu title. Unfortunately, Tuku‘aho proved to be a harsh and ineffective leader with many enemies.³ In 1799 i‘Ulukālala II, also of the Tu‘i Kanokupolu lineage, and his men assassinated Tuku‘aho, sparking a civil war that lasted until 1820.⁴ After the assassination of Tuku‘aho, Fīnau ‘Ulukālala fought a series of battles in Tongatapu, but ultimately was unable

¹Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 1.

² Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 29.

³ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 14. Tuku‘aho was the grandfather of Tāufa‘āhau the first king of Tonga.

⁴ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 44.

to conquer the entire island. Instead he focused his campaigns in Ha‘apai and Vava‘u.⁵ There was no centralized body of power in Tonga at this time, and the Tu‘i Kanokupolu and Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua titles remained vacant. The Tu‘i Tonga, Fuanunuiava, left for Samoa to be tattooed. This was something the Tu‘i Tonga did not usually do and was seen as disgraceful.⁶

During the civil war, Tongans were increasingly hostile to Europeans; they regularly killed those who came ashore, and plundered ships for guns and other material goods. Tonga was described as “a nation of wreckers,” and ships were advised to avoid landing there.⁷ This depiction of Tonga was a stark contrast to the “friendly island” image promoted by Captain Cook.⁸ Two key developments resulted from these hostilities towards Europeans: it slowed the influx of foreign settlers in Tonga, and firearms were incorporated into Tongan warfare. Despite his military prowess, ‘Ulukālala tried on multiple occasions to integrate Tongatapu into his sphere of power but was never successful. Although his intentions were to unify Tonga under his control, there is no indication that ‘Ulukālala was doing so in order to gain international recognition of Tongan sovereignty. Finau ‘Ulukālala II was fighting for traditional Tongan claims to power, and not necessarily sovereignty as defined by eighteenth century European philosophy.

A brief overview of what warfare consisted of in 18th century Tonga, and prior, sheds light on how warfare and military service changed after the creation of the monarchy, and later with the creation of the official state military, the Tonga Defense Force. Battles were typically fought on land, although there was near constantly shuttling of armies from island to island in order to fight and to recuperate.⁹ Fortresses with a surrounding ditch, earthen wall, and wooden fence were common in Tonga, and offensive attackers were adept at sieging such structures. Fortresses were not necessarily permanent structures and could be erected relatively quickly with a large enough army, especially if the location provided natural protection such as a cliff.¹⁰ Those within the fortress would shoot arrows and throw spears at the oncoming attackers.¹¹ Once

⁵ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 16.

⁶ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 46.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 46.

⁹ Edward Gifford, *Tongan Society* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1929), 205.

¹⁰ John Martin, *Tonga Islands: William Mariner’s Account* (Nukualofa: Vava‘u Press, 1991), 126.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 123.

the offensive army was close enough to the garrison, face-to-face combat would commence, and fighters would use various clubs and spears to repel their enemies. William Mariner, an English captive of Fīnau ‘Ulukālala, witnessed many battles lead by ‘Ulukālala. When possible, ‘Ulukālala would take the bodies of deceased enemies and give them to various god-houses as offerings.¹²

Armies were divided into segments, somewhat akin to regiments and companies, known as *kongakau* and *matanga* respectively. *Matanga* were headed by a single commander and *kongakau* were comprised of two or more *matanga*. The leader of a *tau*, a large army, was the *eikita* and the best fighter, but not necessarily of high rank. *Eikita* also had assistant commanders who were great fighters known as *toa*. The commander-and-chief was generally of very high rank such as one of the premier chiefly titles but did not usually participate in actual battle.¹³ In nearly all aspects of Tongan society in the past and present, birth rank and lineage determine one’s place, but in the case of military service, power was based on merit and prowess in battle. In this way, military service has offered social mobility in the rigid hierarchical structure of Tongan society for centuries and continues to do so. Individuals who were great fighters were known as *matatangata*. Accomplished *matatangata* were permitted to wear a special hair style for battle called a *malumalu*.¹⁴ The *malumalu* masked the *matatangata*’s eyes and identity by draping his hair over his face in order to mystify their enemy, who would only see their face once they engaged in combat with the *matatangata*, and he would flip his hair backward to reveal his face.¹⁵ By all accounts, Tongan warfare was highly organized and technologically and culturally complex. From the large vessels *tau* used to transport themselves, to the fortresses they built, to the battle rituals they completed, all elements of Tongan warfare were perfectly adept to the Tongan land and seascape as well as to Tongan religion and culture. Military alliances and partnerships were based on familial relations and religious commonalities, as well as shared goals, and not necessarily motivated solely by monetary or political gain, but also to strengthen the existing relationships between chiefs.

¹² *Ibid.*, 129.

¹³ Edward Gifford, *Tongan Society*, 204.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 223, 205.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 205.

After ‘Ulukālala’s death in 1809, Tupouto‘a (who was the son of Tuku‘aho and Tāufa‘āhau Tupou I’s, the first king of Tonga’s, father) controlled Ha‘apai and ‘Ulukālala’s son Moengangongo assumed control of Vava‘u, before he died in 1812. The Tu‘i Tonga, Fuanunuiava, passed away in 1810 and all three premier Tu‘i titles were vacant.¹⁶ Tupouto‘a eventually assumed control of Vava‘u but he died in 1820, leaving his son Tāufa‘āhau with only a tentative claim to power in Ha‘apai. Tonga remained fractionated and in disarray from civil war and epidemics brought by foreigners. Additionally, a new Tu‘i Tonga had been instated, Laufilitonga, who would become Tāufa‘āhau’s primary political challenger in his early reign.¹⁷ By 1826 Tāufa‘āhau had seized control of Ha‘apai, but control of Vava‘u and Tongatapu were still out of Tāufa‘āhau’s reach.

In the midst of all of the civil unrest in Tonga, a second attempt at Christianization was made. In 1822 the Wesleyan Missionary Society sent a mission to Tonga. In 1827 Aleamotu‘a of Nuku‘alofa, and great uncle to Tāufa‘āhau, adopted Wesleyanism; Aleamotu‘a was installed as Tu‘i Kanokupolu in the same year.¹⁸ His devotion sparked his grandnephew’s interest. Tāufa‘āhau turned to the Christian faith and was formally baptized in 1831. Upon his baptism Tāufa‘āhau assumed the name King George in honor of the late King George III of England.¹⁹ From this moment forward, Tāufa‘āhau’s quest for power became intertwined with the Christianization of Tonga. As part of his efforts to solidify control in Ha‘apai, Tāufa‘āhau burned and obstructed places and items of worship. He also systematically disempowered traditional priests and priestesses, and he continued this method of political and religious conquest in all of his campaigns.²⁰ Additionally, the adoption of the name King George is the first indication that Tāufa‘āhau took interest in European forms of governance. His assumption of the title “king” as opposed to Tu‘i is indicative of a shift in objectives. Previous attempts to consolidate power in Tonga had been within the traditional Tu‘i system. However, Tāufa‘āhau’s attempt at consolidation took the form of creating a monarchy.

After the Napoleonic Wars, the British Navy returned in full force to the Pacific with the task of protecting and preserving British interests and promoting “Christianization and

¹⁶ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 21.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁸ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 54.

¹⁹ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 65.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Civilization.”²¹ This created a symbiotic relationship between British missionaries and the British Navy whereby the Navy would protect the missions’ interests and missions served as strategic naval stations. By allying with British missionaries, Tāufa‘āhau gained the favor of British officials.²² In 1831 Tāufa‘āhau convinced the Tu‘i Vava‘u, Fīnau ‘Ulukālala III, to convert. ‘Ulukālala III facilitated the conversion of Vava‘u with the same destructive tactics Tāufa‘āhau employed in Ha‘apai. Upon his death in 1833 ‘Ulukālala III conceded Vava‘u to Tāufa‘āhau, which made him the principle ruler of both Ha‘apai and Vava‘u. Tāufa‘āhau’s growing power incited the “Tongan Pentecost” in 1834. The Pentecost was characterized as the massive and enthusiastic conversions of thousands of Tongans. However, the religious fervor did not spread throughout Tongatapu, where Tāufa‘āhau’s political rivals resided. The Tu‘i Tonga, Laufilitonga, and the Ha‘a Havea chiefs staunchly rejected Christianity and Tāufa‘āhau’s rise to power. Their disdain for the new faith and the rising king led them to attack missions in Tongatapu and persecute converts.²³ The animosity between Tāufa‘āhau and the Ha‘a Havea chiefs continued into the 1850’s with a series of violent rebellions.

Further evidence of Tāufa‘āhau creating a sovereign nation-state was in his promulgation of the first Tongan law code, the “Code of Vava‘u, 1839.”²⁴ Among other things, the code outlawed murder, theft, idolatry, suicide, free roaming pigs, and tattooing. Tāufa‘āhau’s commitment to Christianity and how deeply his conversion influenced the creation of the Tongan government is evident in his introduction to the “Code of Vava‘u 1839”:

I George make known this my mind to the chiefs of the different parts of Haafuluhoa, also to all my people. May you be very happy.

It is of the God of heaven and earth that I have been appointed to speak to you, he is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, he doeth whatsoever he pleaseth, he lifteth up one and putteth down another, he is righteous in all his words, we are all the work of his hands and the sheep of his pasture, and his will towards us is that we should be happy.²⁵

While missionaries had a significant influence on the King’s political and religious ideology, the Code of Vava‘u was conceptualized by Tāufa‘āhau, not by missionaries.²⁶ The

²¹ Samson, *Imperial Benevolence*, 13.

²² *Ibid.*, 65.

²³ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 59.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 221.

²⁵ “Code of Vava‘u, 1839” in *Church and State in Tonga*, Appendix A, 221.

²⁶ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 122.

code also set the precedent for a state facilitated legal system with the appointment of judges who would hear cases. The values embodied in this law code reflected both Christian and indigenous interests, but the format in which it was presented clearly demonstrated a shift in Tongan governance. The idea of universal and standardized laws was also a shift in the Tongan legal system which was previously at the digression of ruling chiefs; “there was no judicial branch of the government in ancient Tonga. Judges and police were lacking, except in so far as a chief might settle a case and his armed followers execute judgement...Anciently there were no jails and apprehension of a wrong-dower was followed immediately by punishment.”²⁷ In addition to his newly assumed King title, Tāufa‘āhau gained the Tu‘i Kanokupolu title in 1845, after the death of his uncle Aleamotu‘a.²⁸ With this succession, Tāufa‘āhau further legitimized his power in Tonga.²⁹ Tāufa‘āhau’s accession to Tu‘i Kanokupolu legitimized his power based on the existing indigenous hierarchies in Tonga, but he was not quite a sovereign based on the 19th century European definition of sovereignty.

Notably, no foreign governments had recognized Tonga’s independence and Tāufa‘āhau’s political supremacy through treaties, and Tonga still did not have the bureaucratic infrastructure to systematize tax collection and to enforce the law. Tāufa‘āhau created the second law code “The 1850 Code of Law.” The most significant aspect of this code is that it places the sole power of governance in the king.³⁰ Previously, Tongan politics has been far less centralized; layers of chiefs of different rankings governed over sections of land and ensured that tribute would be paid to the Tu‘i Tonga. However, neither the Tu‘i Tonga nor the Tu‘i Kanokupolu, nor the Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua had sole control of the whole of Tonga in the highly centralized and standardized way the modern nation-state system functions.³¹ The 1850 Law Code also outlawed dancing, abortion, and clearly forbade the sale of land to foreigners. Again, the laws promulgated reflected both indigenous and Euro-Christian values, but their presentation and structure clearly mirrored the codes of a bureaucratic nation-state.

²⁷ Gifford, *Tongan Society*, 183.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 127.

³⁰ “The 1850 Code of Law, 1850” in *Church and State in Tonga*, Appendix B, 226.

³¹ Gifford, *Tongan Society*, 98.

Tāufa‘āhau was not the only one to have sought the advice of foreign powers. In 1848 the Tu‘i Tonga, Laufilitonga, converted to Catholicism, and invited French priests to Mu‘a.³² The conversion of the Tu‘i Tonga and the presence of French priests stoked the anxieties of Tāufa‘āhau and the Wesleyan missionaries. In 1852 Tāufa‘āhau declared war against the chiefs at Pea and Houma. The rebellious chiefs hoped that France would intervene in their support. Alas, French assistance never came and Tāufa‘āhau finally squelched the violent rebellions of the Ha‘a Havea chiefs and the Tu‘i Tonga.³³ Although the French never aided the Tu‘i Tonga’s rebellion, this episode demonstrates the contention between France and Britain over territorial expansion in the Pacific. Tongan chiefs clearly manipulated these tensions to their benefit. This episode also increased Tāufa‘āhau’s concerns about imperial powers that could potentially colonize Tonga. It was becoming ever more apparent that Tonga needed foreign recognition of sovereignty in order to preserve Tonga for Tongans.

With political control of all of Tonga, Tāufa‘āhau strengthened the 1850 Code of Law via the 1862 Code of Law. Divisions had been slowly growing between the Wesleyan missionaries and Tāufa‘āhau. Traders, nonreligious business, and military men frequented Tonga and began to gain influence among chiefs. The Tongan copra market was in its early stages, but it was already attracting foreign settlers. In 1852 Tāufa‘āhau took a trip to Australia and met with Charles St. Julian in Sydney. Julian deeply influenced Tāufa‘āhau’s construction of the 1862 Code of Law and it was based on a version of the Hawaiian constitution.³⁴ The most important aspect of this code was the Emancipation Edict, which freed commoners from their chiefs, and established that everyone was equal in the eyes of the law regardless of their rank or title.³⁵ The consequences of the emancipation edict dramatically reduced the power and influence of lesser chiefs. By reducing the influence of lesser chiefs, the Law Code fortified the monarch’s power and served to simplify the complex and traditional Tongan power structures into manageable and malleable units dictated and controlled by the state.³⁶ Traditional Tongan polity was informed genealogically, spiritually, and politically, but these multi-leveled dimensions of power conflict

³² Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 154.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 163.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁶ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Creation Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (Connecticut, New Haven: 1998), 2.

with the modern nation-states' desire to categorize, organize, and control as many layers of society as possible. I am not arguing that the often exploitative and abusive relationship between chiefs and commoners was an ideal organization of power, but rather I acknowledge that this was a fundamental shift from indigenous Tongan socio-political organization. Furthermore, the 1862 Code of Law prohibited the sale of land to foreigners even more firmly than the last code. In later years, Queen Sālote suggested that Tāufa'āhau's adamancy in forbidding land sales was due to the poverty and homelessness he witnessed in Australia. By outlawing the sale of land to foreigners and forcing chiefs to lease land to commoners, Tāufa'āhau hoped to protect Tongans from disenfranchisement.³⁷

Despite Tāufa'āhau's consolidation of power and his promulgation of law codes, no foreign governments had recognized Tonga's sovereignty. The King wanted a constitution, so he employed the missionary Shirley Baker to draft him one. Using the Hawaiian Constitution of 1852 and the laws of New South Wales, Baker created the framework for the 1875 Constitution.³⁸ The new constitution included the Declaration of Rights which assured the equality of all men whether they were chiefly, common, or foreign, it also ensured freedom of religion and speech and the promise that the government would protect its subjects. Additionally, it allowed anyone who paid taxes, who was over the age of 21, and "native or naturalized," the right to vote for members of the Legislative Assembly.³⁹ The 1875 Constitution formalized Tonga's government as a constitutional monarchy and gained the international recognition Tāufa'āhau had sought for so long. In 1876 Tonga signed its first international treaty with Germany; Britain had consistently rejected recognizing Tongan authority, but Tonga's treaty with Germany prompted Britain and the U.S. to follow suit.⁴⁰

From 1875 to 1900, Tonga was a fully consolidated nation-state with a constitutional monarchy, and it was entirely independent from any foreign powers. Tupou I adopted the strategy of making Tonga *fakapalangi* (to make foreign/white) in order to fortify his power and

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 202.; Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 74. It should be noted that a significant amount of credit for Tonga's sovereignty has been attributed to Shirley Baker, but Tāufa'āhau's kingship, political ambitions, conversion to Christianity, and early law codes predated the arrival of Baker by thirty years.

³⁹ Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 206.

⁴⁰ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 80.

protect Tonga from European colonialism in the Pacific. The influence of Wesleyan missionaries on Tupou I's politics is apparent in the early Law Codes of 1839, 1850, 1852, and 1862. Central to his strategy was the help and consultation of the Wesleyan missionaries, the most famous (or infamous) being Shirley Baker. Baker advocated for Tonga's independence, but also helped promulgate the series of laws that forbade traditional Tongan customs and power relations.⁴¹ Lātūkefu emphasizes in his work that Tupou I ultimately made the final decisions on what laws were appropriate for Tonga; he argues that missionaries did have a significant impact on Tupou I's decisions, but they were not controlling Tupou I.⁴²

Although Tonga was not formally colonized, missionaries and Christian doctrine influenced powerful Tongan leaders and ultimately resulted in the suppression of indigenous cultural practices. Furthermore, conversion and religious differences fueled a great deal of violence both during Tāufa'āhau's military conquest of Tonga and after his ascension to power.⁴³ To imagine that Tonga entirely evaded violent and oppressive forms of European colonialism would be erroneous. While Tāufa'āhau did remain in control, and Tongans' were able to keep their land, the 18th and 19th century brought heightened relationships with *palangis*, which in turn sparked violence, and radical cultural and political change. I mention this not to perpetuate the idea of fatal impact, but rather to offer a sober perspective on the realities of early Tongan sovereignty, which was simultaneously impressive, empowering, and ingenious, but also deadly and disruptive.

The Protectorate

Shortly after the establishment of the Tongan Kingdom, through The Constitution of Tonga signed in 1875, tensions between Tonga and Britain were already on the rise. Tupou I knew well that recognition by foreign powers was tantamount to ensuring Tonga's independence. Britain hesitated to recognize Tonga's independence, but Germany engaged in formal relations with Tonga more willingly, and signed a treaty recognizing Tonga's independence and the two nations' friendship in November of 1876.⁴⁴ The treaty allowed

⁴¹ Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 109.

⁴² Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 226-250.

⁴³ Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 164-183.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

Germany to build a coaling station in the Nieafu harbor, along with ensuring favorable trade and other privileges to German citizens in Tonga and vice versa.⁴⁵ Only after Tonga established a formal relationship with Germany did the British government take Tonga's aims for independence seriously. Fearing that Germany would surpass British influence in Tonga, Britain finally came to recognize Tonga through a formal treaty in 1879.⁴⁶ Britain's anxiety over increasing German influence in Tonga was overtly apparent in the 1880 Treaty of Friendship Between Great Britain and Tonga. The first line of the second article states, "His Majesty the King of Tonga engages to grant no other Sovereign or State any rights, powers, authority or privileges in Tonga in excess of those accorded to Her Britannic Majesty."⁴⁷ Tonga's fervent insistence on independence, and Britain's anxiety over losing dominant influence in Tonga would characterize the two nation's relationship into the late 20th century.⁴⁸

Tonga was not the only place that experienced a major political reorganization in the late 19th century; Britain also dramatically shifted their policy in the Pacific towards a more active role in the region. They did so through the creation of the Western Pacific High Commission. The establishment of the Western Pacific High commission was partly rooted in the growing plantations established by the increased numbers of white settlers in the mid 19th century and in the resulting Pacific labor trade.⁴⁹ One of the most infamous planter colonies was Queensland, Australia. Queensland was established as a colony in 1859, through the brutal and violent massacre and removal of indigenous peoples, so that white planters could capitalize on the profitable sugar markets.⁵⁰ The Pacific labor trade in Queensland began around 1863, when planters faced a labor shortage, and it lasted until 1906. As Tracey Banivanua-Mar so successfully argues in her book *Violence and Colonial Dialogue: The Australian-Pacific Indentured Labor Trade*, "the labor trade was not, as many have written, a benign labor

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴⁷ "The Treaty of Friendship Between Great Britain and Tonga," opened for signature 29 November, 1879, *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives*, 1880 Session I, A-07, <https://atojs.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/atojs?a=d&d=AJHR1880-I.2.1.2.9>.

⁴⁸ Esta Fulivai Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II and the Government of Tonga" (Master's thesis, Australian National University, 1976).

⁴⁹ Wood-Ellem, "Behind the battle lines: Tonga in World War II," 17.

⁵⁰ Tracey Banivanua-Mar, *Violence and Colonial Dialogue: The Australian-Pacific Indentured Labor Trade* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 8.

migration...It regulated the right to take mainly young men away from their homes for three years of coerced labor in a tropical industry considered fatal to white labor, with standards of accommodation that were too frequently fatal for Islanders, and with a standard of care that was systemically negligent.”⁵¹ The majority of islanders who were kidnapped, coerced, or misled into the labor trade, came from the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia and Fiji.⁵² Tongans were not spared from black birding either, half of ‘Ata’s population of 300 were kidnapped in 1863 and sold into labor in Peru.⁵³

Reports of brutality and kidnapping reached England and caused anti-slavery groups to take up the issue and demand that the British government take action.⁵⁴ Britain’s first attempt at controlling the Pacific labor trade was with the passage of the Polynesian Labourers Act in 1868 and later the Pacific Islanders Protection Act in 1872.⁵⁵ These laws regulated and legitimized the violence of the labor trade rather than stopping it.⁵⁶ Some of the British reasoning behind establishing a Western Pacific High Commission was to be able to sentence, try, and police British citizens in the Pacific, who would otherwise be outside of Britain’s jurisdiction.

The second most important event that spurred the creation of the Western Pacific High Commission was Britain’s annexation of Fiji. In the 1850s, Cakobau, a powerful Fijian chief, achieved popularity and European support. At the same time, Henele Ma’afu, Tupou I’s cousin, was also, quickly gaining prominence. However, the 1874 Cession of Fiji to Britain ended Ma’afu’s climb to power. The annexation marked a shift in British policy in the Pacific; Britain’s influence in Fiji and Tonga advanced rapidly and assumed an unprecedented legal and formal mode.⁵⁷ In 1877, the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC) was established. The head of the commission was the High Commissioner who was also the governor of Fiji. The WPHC was responsible for trying and convicting British subjects in the Pacific, and later for influencing the governments of Tonga, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Kiribati, as well as advancing and

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Scott Hamilton, *The Stolen Island: Searching for Ata* (Auckland: Bridget Williams Books, 2016), 8.

⁵⁴ Samson, *Imperial Benevolence*, 127.

⁵⁵ Banivanua-Mar, *Violence and Colonial Dialogue*, 32.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁵⁷ John Spurway, “Ma’afu’s World is in the Hills’: The Role of Tui Lau in the Cession of Fiji,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 39, no.1. (2004): 3-21, 3.

protecting British imperial interests in the Pacific more generally.⁵⁸ The point of contact for the High Commissioner in Tonga would be the British Agent and Consul to Tonga.

The earliest signs of conflict between Britain and the Tongan government, began in 1885 when Tupou I established the Free Church of Tonga. He did so on the advice of Shirley Baker and in opposition to the Wesleyan mission. Against Tupou I's wishes, the Wesleyan Mission recalled Baker in the year prior. He was recalled because of his significant influence in Tongan politics, which went against the mission's policies. The break from the Wesleyan church, and the ensuing persecution of Wesleyans by the Tongan government, prompted the British to intervene more seriously in Tongan affairs.⁵⁹ The WPHC carried out an investigation against Shirley Baker, and recommended that he be deported, and that a religious liberty act be reinstated.⁶⁰ However, Baker remained until the High Commissioner James Bates Thurston officially deported him from Tonga in 1890. This was the first of many times that the British would overstep their authority in Tonga.

After Baker's dismissal, Siaosi Tuku'aho, the King's primary political rival, became the Premier and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. 'Uiliame Tungī, Tuku'aho's father, continued as the Chairman of Parliament and Minister of Lands.⁶¹ 'Uiliame Tungī was heir to the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua title which had become defunct in 1797 and was suppressed by Tāufa'āhau.⁶² Siaosi Tuku'aho, Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake, and Tungī, were all high chiefs with legitimate and ancestral claims to rulership; they relished in Baker's deportation and in Tupou I's devalued status. Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake, the King's grandson and the father of Tupou II, went so far as to insult and debase the king. When the chiefs went to demand that one of them be named the Premier, Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake said to the aged and ill Tupou I, "Tupou, your reputation is bad throughout the world; your name stinks."⁶³ This unsavory interaction demonstrates the ways traditional Tongan politics were enmeshed in monarchical politics and were also manipulating imperial interests. Britain's interjection into Tongan politics was an abridgment of Tongan

⁵⁸ Deryck Scarr, *Fragments of Empire: a history of the Western Pacific High Commission 1877-1914* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1967), 30.

⁵⁹ Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 89.

⁶⁰ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 38.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶² Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 21.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 217.

sovereignty, but some chiefs welcomed the action as a means to aggrandize themselves in ways they perceived to be their right because of their high-ranking genealogies.

The power triangle between Tonga, Britain, and Germany played an exceptionally large role in the late 19th and early 20th century leading up to WWI. This triangle was further complicated by the contentious currents of indigenous Tongan political competition that characterized the political atmosphere. In addition, many of those who had been deprived of power under the new political system grew frustrated with the changes. These tensions would not deescalate for another several decades. Furthermore, Tonga's tightening relationship with Germany and German copra companies continued to peak Britain's anxieties. Britain was already in a tug-of-war for control of the Pacific with Germany, particularly in Samoa. Therefore, the shift in power from Tupou I to his great grandson Tāufa'āhau Tupou II, and the ensuing financial and political instability, primed Tonga for Britain's encroaching influence.

The 18-year-old Tupou II assumed the throne in 1893, after his great grandfather's death. The Premier, Tuku'aho did not challenge Tupou II's ascension, despite Tuku'aho also having legitimate claims to the throne. The young Tupou II needed to fill both his ancestral role as the new Tu'i Kanokupolu and his new secular role as Tonga's monarch.⁶⁴ Both a crowning and a traditional kava ceremony were performed to install the King and the Tu'i Kanokupolu.⁶⁵ As the first monarch to inherit the throne, Tupou II had to carefully toe the line between traditional Tongan protocol and the new European style of government. During his early reign, Tupou II worked cautiously to not arouse conflict between himself and Tuku'aho.⁶⁶ Tupou II managed this relationship by being absent from the capital and staying in his home in Ha'apai. By keeping his distance, Tupou II allowed Tuku'aho to retain the power he had assumed with the help of Thurston.⁶⁷

This lasted until the summer of 1893, when a measles epidemic killed 5% of the Tongan population. The ship carrying the disease was allowed to dock while Tuku'aho was in charge, and he was therefore blamed. In response, Tupou II removed him and installed Siosateki Tonga Veikune (Sateki) as premier; Sateki had no significant ancestral claims to power and was a long-

⁶⁴ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 52.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

time ally of Tupou I.⁶⁸ Sateki was both more competent and more loyal than Tuku'aho, but Tupou II still struggled to keep the government functioning efficiently. This was in part due to his youth and inexperience.⁶⁹ By 1897 the government found itself in financial turmoil, predominantly due to over spending, and the drought and hurricanes that devastated the islands in the years prior.⁷⁰ In an effort to soothe some of Tonga's financial woes, Parliament took a £500 loan from Deutsche Handel's und Plantagen-Gesellschaft (DHPG).⁷¹ Tonga's increasing debt to Germany worried and frustrated British officials.

Tonga maintained a close relationship with Germany and German copra companies since they acknowledged Tonga's independence in 1876. This was a fact that irked British imperialists, especially after Britain annexed Fiji in 1874. The annexation of Fiji made Britain even more eager to control the surrounding South Pacific seas. The British were particularly concerned about Vava'u's Neiafu harbor, because they believed it was the best harbor in the Pacific and could easily serve as a base for foreign powers to threaten Fiji. Even further to Britain's displeasure, Tonga's treaty of friendship with Germany allowed them to have a coaling station in the Neiafu harbor. Therefore, Britain seized the opportunity to secure British influence in Tonga in 1899 when Germany, America, and Britain agreed to divide Samoa between the U.S. and Germany. This agreement was made in exchange for Germany and the U.S. relinquishing their interests in Tonga to Britain.⁷² No Samoans or Tongans were consulted during this process. Certainly, if Tupou II had been consulted, he would have vehemently objected to such an abridgement of Tongan sovereignty.⁷³ However, the greatest blow to Tongan independence was yet to come.

In April of 1900, the British Special Commissioner Basil Thomson arrived in Nuku'alofa with the sole purpose of convincing the King to sign a protectorate agreement that would secede a significant amount of Tonga's independence to Great Britain.⁷⁴ The treaty required that Tonga be placed under the "protection" of Britain. In doing so, Britain would have sole control of

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁷² Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 222.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

Tonga's foreign affairs. Britain also gained free access to Tongan ports and legal control over foreigners.⁷⁵ A few factions of powerful chiefs supported the treaty because they did not support Tupou II, but the King himself was staunchly against the treaty, especially the aspects that required him to relinquish control of Tongan foreign policy.⁷⁶

Thomson's reflection on his role in the protectorate agreements, shows his true disregard for Pacific independence. The following is his description of his return to Tonga. During the trip he would spend six weeks attempting to convince Tupou II to surrender Tonga's full independence to the British Crown:

Ten years bring many changes in the circumstances of little states. When I was last in Tonga, Hawaii was independent; three great Powers were still wrangling over Samoa; countless islands in the Pacific were yet unclaimed. All had fallen now, and eyes had been cast upon Tonga-the last independent state in the Pacific. She could make no resistance; her seizure was only a question of months, unless she had a powerful protector. For political, strategic and geographical reasons England could not afford to tolerate a foreign Power in possession of the best harbor in the Pacific islands within striking distance of Fiji...Germans had ceded all their treaty rights to us, we had either to take what was given to us, or leave the field open to others. In extending our protection, therefore, to the Tongans we were serving their interests even more than our own.⁷⁷

Thomson's high opinion of himself and his surety in the British imperial mission demonstrates his personal political zeal and distrust of indigenous governance. Additionally, his feminization of Tonga reflects imperial rationalizations of conquest by depicting indigenous spaces as fragile and helpless without white male protection and guidance. Thomson's account also distorts the reality of the context in which the Treaty of Friendship was actually signed.⁷⁸ Tupou II certainly did not believe that the treaty was "serving [Tonga's] interests more than [Britain's]," and many of the Tongans in Parliament who supported the treaty were mostly interested in spiting Tupou II.⁷⁹ The Draft Treaty that Thomson presented to Tupou II, had intentionally vague language that did not promise that Britain would not annex Tonga. Tupou II's greatest concern was the first and second article of the Draft Treaty which read:

⁷⁵ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 107.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁷⁷ Basil C. Thomson, *Savage Island: an account of sojourn in Niue and Tonga* (London: unknown publisher, 1902), 152.

⁷⁸ Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 223.

⁷⁹ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 112.

Article I

His Majesty the King of Tonga agrees to place freely and unreservedly himself, his subjects, and his dominions under the protection of Her Britannic Majesty from the date of the signature of the present Treaty.

Article II

His Majesty the King of Tonga further understands and agrees that all his relations of any sort whatever with foreign Powers, shall be conducted under the sole advice and through the channel of Her Majesty's Government.⁸⁰

Thompson offered to include, "without prejudice to the sovereignty of the King to Tonga," in the first article, which momentarily appeased Tupou II and his supporters.⁸¹ However, by the next day, Tupou II rescinded his approval. After weeks of negotiations, Thomson finally resorted to threatening Tupou in order to obtain his signature.⁸² To finalize the agreement, despite Tupou II's numerous protestations, Thomson announced Tonga's new status as a British Protectorate without Tupou II's consent. According to Thomson's official report, he went to the city center in Nuku'alofa, and stated:

Whereas His Majesty the King of Tonga has been pleased to sign an Agreement, dated the 2nd May 1900, and a Treaty dated 18th May 1900, wherein he agrees that his relations with foreign powers shall be conducted under the sole advice of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and that Her Majesty shall protect his dominions from external hostile attacks, it is hereby proclaimed that a Protectorate by Her Britannic Majesty has been established accordingly, and all persons concerned are commanded to take notice of this establishment.⁸³

The following morning, Tupou II admitted that he was very dissatisfied with Tonga's new status as a British Protectorate, but that he was relieved to see that the British flag was not flying above Tonga. The country had maintained at least some of its domestic sovereignty.⁸⁴ The language of the treaty draft, that Tupou II had tried so ardently not to sign, left ample room for the outright annexation of Tonga. The other articles stated that the British Navy would have free access to Tonga's ports and harbors, and that an appointed British Consul must be consulted for

⁸⁰ "Draft Treaty of Friendship between Great Britain and Tonga, 1900," as cited by Penelope A. Lavaka, "The Limits of Advice: Britain the and Kingdom of Tonga, 1900-1970," PhD diss., (Australia National University, 1981), 6-A.

⁸¹ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 109.

⁸² Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 223.

⁸³ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 118.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

all important government affairs. Even from this early treaty between Tonga and Britain, it is apparent that the abridgement of Tongan was part of a military strategy, which allowed the British to utilize precious Tongan land to defend Fiji from German threats and to extend the reach of the British Navy in the Pacific.

The Draft Treaty and the Treaty of Friendship that was later ratified, deeply wounded Tongan independence, but did not entirely abrogate it. The first and second article in the official Treaty of Friendship read:

Article I

His Majesty the King of Tonga agrees that he will have no relations of any sort with foreign powers concerning the alienation of any land or any part of his Sovereignty or any demands for monetary compensation.

Article II

Her Majesty will at all times to the utmost of her power take whatever steps may be necessary to protect the Government and territory of Tonga from any external hostile attacks; and territory of Tonga from any external hostile attacks; and for this or similar purposes Her Majesty's officers shall at all times have free access to the waters and harbours of Tonga; and the King of Tonga hereby agrees to lease to Her Majesty a suitable site or sites in any harbour or harbours in Tonga for the purposes of establishing a station or stations for the coaling and repair of Her Majesty's ships, and for the erection of any military works for fortification which may be necessary or desirable for the protection of such stations, and will at all times to the utmost of His power co-operate with and aid Her Majesty's naval or military forces in defence of such station or stations.⁸⁵

Each experience of colonialism and imperialism is unique, and no two affected peoples are affected in the same way. For Tonga, the fact that the Treaty of Friendship did not completely nullify its domestic sovereignty, often belies the extent to which Britain curtailed Tongan independence. As aforementioned, British missionaries played a large hand in the early law codes promulgated by Tupou I. These codes bore the trappings of repressive colonial mandates that criminalized cultural practices and disempowered those who previously enjoyed influence under the traditional political system. These laws were not forced upon Tupou I, and they were written with his full volition, but the outcomes of the laws were still a form of cultural violence, or at the very least disruption. The extent to which these laws suppressed Tongan culture is apparent in the popularity and power of Christianity in Tonga today, along with the near disappearance of Tongan tattoo practice and the cultural emphasis on modesty, and

⁸⁵ Lavaka, "The Limits of Advice," 9-A.

abstinence, that were not apparent prior to missionization.⁸⁶ Thomson's coup formalized British control in Tonga and institutionalized the social change that had previously been promoted by missionaries. While Tupou I had been able to choose more readily which reforms he believed were helpful to Tonga, Tupou II under the 1901 Treaty of Friendship was coerced to adopt many of Britain's suggestions under threat of dethronement.

I raise these points to emphasize that the myth of perpetual and continuous Tongan sovereignty has too often deflected analyses of colonialism and imperialism in Tonga and has prompted researchers to look at Tongan culture and foreign policy without adequately questioning the ways in which Western imperialism informs Tongan political decisions and social change. This critical lens is especially useful when considering Tongan participation in global military affairs, and the ways in which Tonga continues to be enmeshed in the global military industrial complex. Examining the motivations for Tongan participation in international military campaigns, that from a geopolitical standpoint do not threaten Tonga, reveals the insidious nature of militarization, and its particular articulations in a nation that was never formally colonized. Critiquing Tongan involvement in foreign military campaigns is essential in combating narratives that fuel "imperial nostalgia" by not questioning the impact militarism has on the political health of Tonga and the broader Pacific. By reexamining Tonga's independence narrative and assessing Tonga's role in global military conflicts, both historically and in the present, we can create a more accurate picture of where Tonga fits in the overall militarization of the Pacific. The 1901 Treaty of Friendship between Tonga and Britain is starting point for this enmeshment in the global military industrial complex. The manipulative and coercive nature by which the document was signed and ratified, further reflects the true and continued nature of Tonga's relationship with Western powers.

⁸⁶ One of the most popular and readily available accounts of pre-Christian Tonga is *Tonga Islands: William Mariner's Account* by John Martin M.D., and another popular work on pre-Christian Tonga is *Tongan Society* by Edward Winslow Gifford. John Martin *Tonga Islands: William Mariner's Account* (Nukualofa: Vava'u Press, 1991) and Edward Gifford, *Tongan Society* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1929.)

Chapter II

From Protectorate to Protector: Tongan Participation in WWI

The decade leading up to WWI in Tonga was full of dramatic change that ultimately dictated Tonga's unenthusiastic response to WWI and the British effort. Tupou II was a young and inexperienced ruler and Britain's influence was continually growing in Tonga. It would be up to Tupou II to reassert Tonga's sovereignty and determine the best course of action for Tongan participation in WWI, given the country's previously friendly relationship with Germany. Although imperfect, Tupou II's decisions preserved Tonga's domestic sovereignty and eventually led to his daughter's, Queen Sālote Tupou III's, amicable relationship with the British.

The Treaty of Friendship was ratified in February of 1901, 13 years before the start of WWI. The treaty was already a product of growing animosities between Britain and Germany. As part of the Treaty of Friendship, Tupou II and the Tongan government would be required to consult on important domestic matters with an appointed British Consul, the first of whom was W. Hamilton Hunter.¹ Hunter wasted no time in overreaching his powers, and immediately insisted on an excessive amount of land to accommodate his new British Consulate. In order to ensure that his wishes would be met, he enlisted the help of a British naval captain to demand the accommodations he desired.² This characterized the relationship between Tupou II and Hunter; Tupou II repeatedly attempted to assert his authority while Hunter frequently threatened the use of British force. Tupou II and Hunter clashed incessantly, most often over the treatment of Europeans, their lease agreements, and rent rates. Tupou II was clearly determined to maintain as much control as possible over domestic affairs, especially those pertaining to land issues.³ By 1902 the relationship soured further. Hunter's scathing reports of Tonga to the British High Commissioner jeopardized Tonga's independence and reignited discussions on whether or not Tonga should be annexed by New Zealand or Britain.⁴

¹ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 120.

² *Ibid.*, 123.

³ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 141.

In 1904 British High Commissioner Sir Everard im Thurn decided to investigate the state of Tongan affairs for himself by traveling to Nuku'alofa and meeting with the King and by examining the Tongan Treasury. A Sydney newspaper described im Thurn's visit and intentions:

Governor of Fiji and High Commissioner of Toga, his Excellency Mr. Im Thurn came to Toga in H.M.S. Clio early in December, and with a large body of bluejackets, fully armed, proceeded at once to the King's palace, and after paying his respects to him, told him the commission he had received from the British Government, and gave him to understand that it would be useless for him or his chiefs to attempt to obstruct the carrying out of the reforms in the Togan Government, which were so urgently required.⁵

Once again, Britain demanded control by threat of force. Despite arriving on a naval ship complete with fully armed soldiers, Tupou II and Premier Sateki refused to comply with im Thurn's demands. Out of frustration he concluded that Sateki, and the Minister of Finance should be deported to Fiji at once.⁶ Startled by im Thurn's rash and illegal actions, Tupou II followed the High Commissioner's instructions for fear of being deported. Im Thurn went on to instate Sione Tupou Mateialona as Premier and also replaced the Treasurer, Chief of Police, the Chief Justice and a variety of other lesser government positions.⁷ Im Thurn's actions, made it exceedingly clear that Britain did not intend to be a bystander and benevolent protector to Tongan domestic politics. The High Commissioner required that the King sign a new Supplementary Agreement, which greatly reduced his power and required him to consult the British Consul for most domestic decisions. When Tupou II attempted not to sign the agreement, im Thurn threatened to deport and dethrone him, according to the Sydney *Catholic Press*, Tupou responded:

"As far as I'm concerned your threat does not affect me in the least; it is just the same thing to me whether I die in Fiji or any other country. But as my people dearly love their country and independence I shall for their sake sign. At the same time I call upon all present to bear witness that I've been forced to do so by the threat to deport me and give away our country to the British."⁸

Tupou II's words reflect his commitment to his people and Tongan sovereignty. Ironically, becoming a protectorate of Britain made Tonga more vulnerable to abridgements of sovereignty. Although Germany's relationship with Tonga was no less imperial in its intentions,

⁵ "Breaking the Power of King Tapou II of Toga," *The Catholic Press*, March 9, 1905.

⁶ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 149.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁸ "Breaking the Power of King Tapou II of Toga," *The Catholic Press*, March 9, 1905.

it was ultimately Britain that curtailed Tongan sovereignty. The disharmony between Britain and Tonga only grew as WWI neared.

One potentially positive aspect of Tonga's status as a protectorate was the fact that the country had access to British funding, that allowed for public works projects to be completed. The access to better funding allowed the government to build new roads, government offices, and better harbors. In general Tonga's overall financial state was greatly repaired.⁹ However, another way of understanding Britain's interference in Tongan politics is as a further disruption of indigenous power frameworks that were still functioning within the Tongan government. Some might argue that Britain's overreach was ultimately good for Tonga because it facilitated a more functional government, but the style of government that Britain's intrusions facilitated was a European one. In fact, Hunter and im Thurn's primary intentions were to improve the quality of life for Europeans who were living in Tonga. The system under Tupou and Sateki stymied many Europeans' abilities to renew their loans and acquire trading permits.¹⁰

Tongans themselves did not call for Britain to interfere in the country's affairs, and most Tongans did not wish to see their King disempowered despite some of his leadership failings.¹¹ Tupou II's power was derived as much from his constitutional right to be the monarch as it was from his high birth rank and his indigenous claims to power as Tu'i Kanokupolu. Britain's interference not only suppressed Tupou II's power as a monarchical sovereign, but also disrupted his right to rule granted to him via his ancestral title that predated western style governance in Tonga by several centuries. This fact was not part of Hunter's or the High Commission's calculations that reasoned that if Tupou II did not comply with their suggestions that he could simply be deported and replaced.¹²

The extent of British influence in Tonga came to a head in 1909 when the Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha was established under the leadership of Alister Donald Cameron. The copra and banana export business were thriving in Tonga at the time, but the relationship between the palangi traders and Tongan farmers was less than harmonious. This was due to traders giving

⁹ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 117.

¹⁰ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 146.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 152.

discounts to palangi traders and charging Tongans full price.¹³ Nobleman Vaea of Houma and Cameron partnered to create the Kautaha, so that Tongans could export their copra and then receive maximum profit by cutting out the palangi middlemen.¹⁴ The venture proved highly popular, up to 4,000 producers joined, and branches were formed in Ha‘api (Ha‘apai?) and Vava‘u. In addition to exports, the Kautaha began to import goods from overseas, and sold them wholesale to members.¹⁵ The success of the Kautaha infuriated the independent traders, who then reached out to the Western Pacific High Commission and British Consul to Tonga, William Telfer Campbell, to stop the Kautaha.¹⁶

The manager of Ha‘api (Ha‘apai ?)branch, R.G.M. Denny, attempted to start a new cooperative and slandered the Tonga Ma‘a Tonga Kautaha members. Due to Denny’s defamatory comments, Cameron sued Denny. Since they were both foreigners, Campbell oversaw the case. Campbell believed the Kautaha was exploitative and put in motion a full audit of the business. In 1910, before the conclusion of the audit, which found no serious fraud or exploitation, the High Commissioner, Sir Everard im Thurn, ordered the Premier Mateialona to close the Kautaha, against the wishes of the Tongan members of the cooperative. The Kautaha was closed and liquidated; the members’ property was not returned but instead sold for less than the full value.¹⁷ When the Acting Chief Judicial Commissioner of the WPHC, Albert Ehrhard, heard the case in Tonga, he acquitted Cameron, and praised the value of business such as the Kautaha.¹⁸ Despite the verdict, Campbell continued to pressure the Tongan government and Tupou II to deport Cameron, but the King would not comply. In addition to demanding the deportation of Cameron, Campbell also wanted the King to suspend Chief Justice Robert Louis Skeen, and threatened that Britain would annex Tonga if the King did not do so.¹⁹ Tupou II

¹³ Noel Rutherford, “Tonga Ma‘a Tonga Kautaha,” *The Journal of Pacific History* 16, no. 1 (1981):20-41, 22.

¹⁴ Gifford, *Tongan Society*, 35. Rutherford does not offer a personal name for the Nobleman Vaea of Homua, but the Ha‘a Vaea lineage is an ancient one that is associated with the Tu‘i Ha‘atakalaua lineage.

¹⁵ Rutherford, “Tonga Ma‘a Tonga Kautaha,” 25.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 35

continued to support the Kautaha and felt that it was Campbell's meddling and bias towards palangi businesses that was the true issue, not the Kautaha.

The new High Commissioner, Sir Henry May, also felt that Campbell's actions had been unjust, but went to Tonga to reason with Tupou II. The King refused to submit to May's wishes, because he found them unconstitutional.²⁰ Further, Tupou II requested that Campbell be removed from Tonga. He also demanded that the parameters of the 1905 Supplementary Agreement, which had greatly curtailed the power of the King and increased the powers of the WPHC and the British Consul to Tonga, be renegotiated.²¹ The outcome proved to be monumental in reestablishing domestic sovereignty in Tonga; the advice of the Consul and WPHC could no longer outweigh the decisions of the Tongan government and the Tongan constitution would be held above the Supplementary Agreement and the Treaty of Friendship.²²

The positive outcome for Cameron in the lawsuit and Tupou II's support of the Kautaha resulted in the strengthening of Tongan sovereignty. Additionally, it led to the dismissal of Campbell in 1911, and a vote of no confidence in Premier Mateialona. Since Campbell had seriously overstepped his power and had cost the Tongan government considerably in his misdoings, the British government was forced to renegotiate their terms of power in Tonga. The King was able to name Tevita B. Tu'ivakano as Premier and Treasurer. This decision brought a significant amount of peace and stability to the Tongan government.²³ Tu'ivakano was neither opposed to Tupou II nor fully committed to him, so he served as a skillful mediator between the King, the British Consul, and Parliamentary chiefs who opposed Tupou II.

World War I

Shortly after the Kautaha case, WWI broke out and all the reaches of the British Empire were called to pledge allegiance to Britain and to support the war effort. Tongans were no strangers to political conflict or warfare, but this was the first global conflict that the country had been a part of since the creation of a European style monarchy in Tonga. Tonga's soured relationship with Britain and previously close relationship with Germany resulted in the King's

²⁰ Rutherford, "Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha," 38.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Fusitu'a, "King George Tupou II," 181.

declaration of neutrality.²⁴ Tupou II expressed his anxiety over the war and of Tonga's precarious and limited sovereignty in his address at the Opening of the 14th Assembly of Parliament on December 17th, 1914,

Never in the past have I experienced such times of hardship as at present existing our land, and that is the principal reason why Parliament has been convoked and meets here to-day. To me the future of the Kingdom seems clouded, but when all the leading Nations of the Earth are involved in difficulties how can Tonga hope to escape from similar troubles. What Kingdom in the whole world has not suffered? All are in distress on account of the war which is raging, and if the waters at the fountain head are defiled how can the flowing stream remain clear. What Governments of the world have not been assembled in Parliament since the war broke out?...

Although we share in common with all the feeling of distress occasioned by the war, yet we feel that the peace of Tonga has not yet been affected, and although we stand surrounded on all sides by the war, and although Tonga has not yet come within that radius of actual warfare in the Pacific, yet there is Samoa to the north of us, Tahiti to the east, New Guinea to the west and many other places throughout the world which have repeatedly been captured by the Great Nations of the Earth. But how stands Tonga to-day? That we have remained safe is indeed a miracle, but we feel no doubt for we know that the Lord Almighty commands all things. It is by his grace that that great nation whom we have Treaty relations has been so guided that safety remains with us.²⁵

Throughout the rest of Tupou II's opening and in his closing, he made no mention of Germany or Austria-Hungary, and he did not expressly espouse support for Britain or France. Rather, he thanked Britain and the British Consul for allowing Tonga to retain the level of independence it currently enjoyed and voiced his anxieties about the future of Tongan sovereignty. Tupou II's words and concerns emphasize that the largest outside threat to Tongan sovereignty was European colonialism. In his references to Sāmoa, Tahiti, and New Guinea, Tupou II showed that he viewed European colonialism as a powerful threat in the Pacific. Britain was not a natural ally of Tonga nor was Germany a natural enemy; therefore, at the outbreak of WWI an image of Germany as an enemy needed to be constructed.

This process of constructing the enemy is most apparent when comparing Tonga's response to WWII to the nation's response to WWI, which will be covered in the following chapter. However, in brief, Queen Sālote and the Tongan public enthusiastically rallied to support Britain immediately after Britain declared war on Germany in 1939. Comparatively,

²⁴ "In the South Seas, The Taking of Samoa, Tonga's Neutrality," *The Barrier Miner*, September 9, 1914.; Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 122.

²⁵ "Opening of the 14th Assembly," *Tonga Government Gazette*, January 15, 1915.

Tongans' reaction to WWI was mixed, and most people were primarily concerned with how the war affected the copra trade.²⁶ Still, Tonga's protectorate status meant that the government was required to comply with British wartime mandates regardless of public opinion in Tonga.

Britain declared war on Germany on August 4th, 1914. Some Europeans in Tonga immediately enlisted in Australian forces, but the majority of Tongan participation didn't come until later.²⁷ In September 1914 the King of England issued a detailed proclamation that was spread across the colonies, which forbade business interactions with "enemy aliens." The proclamation required that residents of German or Austro-Hungarian descent must be catalogued and treated as "enemy aliens." This meant that German families who had been living in Tonga for decades were now unable to enjoy their full rights in Tonga, regardless of what their relationship was with the Tongan government and the larger Tongan community.²⁸ In 1916, the British Consul in Tonga created a list of "enemy aliens," and counted 150 German subjects, some of whom were deported to NZ as prisoners of war.²⁹ This list was extremely comprehensive, and included children, elderly, and hafekasi Tongans who were only partly German. One account even marked a four-year-old boy of German descent who was born in Ha'apai as an "enemy alien."³⁰

Although individuals with German heritage were immediately accounted for, the treaty between Germany and Tonga was not terminated until 1916.³¹ From Tupou II's letter to the High Commissioner on the matter, it is apparent that the treaty was ended due to British mandate, and not based on the Tongan government's initiative. This was not the only instance where Tupou II

²⁶ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 121.

²⁷ Christine Liava'a, *Koe Kau To'a Na'anau Poletau, Valiant Volunteers: Soldiers from Tonga in the Great War* (Auckland: Polygraphia, 2011), 11.

²⁸ "Second Supplement to The London Gazette," September 9, 1914, Western Pacific Archives, MSS & Archives 2003/1-WHPC 50, Special Collections, University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services.

²⁹ Liava'a, *Valiant Volunteers*, 12.

³⁰ "Enemy Aliens," microfilm reel BCT 1.

³¹ "Siouisi Tupou II to G.B. Smith-Rewse, Esquire," November 10, 1916, Western Pacific archives, MSS & Archives 2003/1-BCT 1/3. Special Collections, University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services.

needed prodding in order to fully support the British cause against Germany. In a 1917 letter from Tupou II to the acting British Consul, G.B. Smith-Rewse, Tupou II wrote:

2. Regarding the portrait of the German Emperor and other German portraits hanging in prominent positions in the Palace, they shall be removed this week according to the request made to me, by the Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, through His Excellency the High Commissioner.

I am, Sir,
Your true friend,
G. Tubou II³²

Given that this correspondence took place three years after the start of WWI, it is interesting to note that German portraits were only removed from the Palace after it was ordered by the High Commissioner. The fact that the King had not removed the portraits on his own initiative suggests that the idea of Germany as a clear and serious enemy was not fully formed. Additionally, the King's possession of the portraits demonstrates how close and significant the relationship between Tonga and Germany once was. Unlike WWII, where Japan's offensive course in the Pacific threatened Tonga's safety, WWI posed little threat to Tonga's wellbeing. Tonga's official policy towards the war was relatively ambivalent, and most of the correspondences between Tupou II and the British Consul to Tonga and the *Tonga Government Gazette* were focused on internal economic issues rather than the war. One of the ways Tongans did express support was by donating to the Lord Kitchener Memorial Fund (LKMF), that provided aid to wounded soldiers.³³ On one occasion, in May of 1917, the Governor of Ha'apai, J. Maeakafa, collected £457 for the LKMF, which was no small sum for Tongans at the time and suggests that many were interested in supporting the war cause.³⁴

While monetary support for the war was common, enlistment in the armed forces was low. Tonga had a small guard and artillery, but no standing army as it does today.³⁵ Participants from Tonga were all voluntary, and most of them were foreign nationals of European descent. In

³² "Siouisi Tupou II to G. B. Smith-Rewse, Esquire." 26 July, 1917, Western Pacific archives, MSS & Archives 2003/1-BCT 1/3. Special Collections, University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services.

³³ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 121.

³⁴ "Siouisi Tupou II to G.B. Smith-Rewse, Espuire." 28, May 1917, Western Pacific Archives, MSS & Archives 2003/1-BCT 1/3. Special Collections, University of Auckland Libraries and Learning Services.

³⁵ The Constitution of Tonga, 1875. Full copy available Lātūkefu, *Church and State*, 252.

total 91 men from Tonga served in WWI: 3 Reservists, 10 in the Australian Imperial Force, 2 in French Forces as chaplains, one British Royal Engineer, 62 in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF), and 15 in the Pioneer Maori Battalion. Two men died in action, while one succumbed to disease.³⁶ In 1916 recruiters from the New Zealand Army went to Tonga to recruit soldiers into the Pioneer Maori Battalion and Auckland Infantry Battalion.³⁷ Most men from Tonga served in NZEF and fought in the Battle of Messines and Passchendaele in Belgium in 1917. Those who were Tongan generally served in the Pioneer Maori Battalion and those who were hafekasi chose between enlisting in the Maori Battalion or the Auckland Infantry Battalion.³⁸

Tongan Soldiers in WWI

An important aspect of Teaiwa's approach to understanding military participation among islanders is articulation, which requires one to look beyond the political and monetary motivations and ramifications of enlistment, and to consider the individual and cultural motivations that inspire participants. Although the relationship between the Tongan and British governments were tense at the onset of WWI, a few individual Tongan men still chose to join New Zealand forces regardless. Their military and medical records do not offer insight into the reasons why these men chose willingly to fight alongside the Allies in WWI, but their enthusiasm and commitment to the cause is evident in their multiple enlistments and valiant service. The following is a brief look at just a few of the Tongan men who chose to enlist, and a reflection of their possible motivations and consequences of their participation.

The Tongan men who served came from both modest and prominent backgrounds. One Tongan man who served was David Fotu. He worked for the Tongan Education Board as a school teacher. Fotu enlisted in the Maori Reinforcements in 1918. He never served overseas, but he lived in New Zealand for the rest of his life. Interestingly, on his medical file, Fotu listed that he had a tattoo on his left arm, even though tattoos were made illegal in Tonga under Tupou I.³⁹

³⁶ Liava'a, *Valiant Volunteers*, 9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ David Fotu, "Medical Examination, 1918" Archives New Zealand, Archway Record, http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE17265598 (accessed November 20, 2018)

The medical report does not describe what type of tattoo Fotu had, but traditional Tongan tattoos were not generally on arms, but rather waist down. Another participant was Tevita Mohenoa who lived and worked in New Zealand, when he decided to join the New Zealand Rifle Brigade. The New Zealand Rifle Brigade served in the Battle of Messines which was a perilous fight; although the allied troops proved successful, soldiers describe the battlefield as an endless stream of bullets, murder, and explosions.⁴⁰ After his service in the Rifle Brigade, Mohenoa later served in the 2nd Battalion for Britain, and again with the Rarotongan Contingent in Egypt.⁴¹



Fig. 2 The back of the photograph reads: “No3 Platoon, A Company Coastal Defence 3rd Auckland Regiment. The Island boys are Tongan. Narrow Neck Camp 23318 Donated by J. Duffy, 210 Arthur St.”

One young man, Sione Talia’uli was a medical student in NZ when he enlisted in 1915 to the 3rd Maori Contingent.⁴² His first deployment was to Cairo where he served as a corporal before returning to New Zealand in 1916 after catching measles. The following year Talia’uli joined the 12th Maori Reinforcements and returned to Egypt. During his service, he caught

⁴⁰ Liava’a, *Valiant Volunteers*, 17.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴² Liava’a, *Valiant Volunteers*, 12.

pneumonia in Palestine. He died in 1918 and is buried in Ramleh Cemetery.^{43 44} His medals and the news of his passing were sent to his son and aunt in Kolofu'ou in 1923.⁴⁵ His military records offer no insight into why Talia'uli joined the military, or what he might have been thinking during his service, or in his last moments in a land so far away from Tonga. Sione Talia'uli was a young man when he died, most likely around the age of 26, but his life would have been full of exciting and dramatic changes. He was Anglican, and his baptism date is listed as June 21, 1892, a year before Tāufa'āhau passed away, and 9 years before Tonga became a British Protectorate. Talia'uli listed his next of kin as his brother Malakai who lived in Nuku'alofa. Given the locations of his kin it is likely that he grew up on Tongatapu in Kolofu'ou.⁴⁶ During his childhood he would have been in close proximity to the government and Tonga's main points of trade, business, and development. It's impossible to know if Talia'uli would have joined the war effort if Tonga was not a protectorate, but his multiple enlistments indicate that his motivations were likely personal more so than out of obligation or coercion.

Like all Tongans who joined the NZEF during WWI, Talia'uli joined the war effort by choice. Tupou II did not call on Tongans to enlist, and Talia'uli did not join once but twice. He was obviously a smart man since he was studying medicine and he served as a corporal and as a translator during his time in service. His family no doubt lost an important member of their *kainga*, and Tonga lost a brilliant mind.⁴⁷ When remembering Sione Talia'uli, what does his body in the grounds of Palestine say about the entanglements of Tonga and empire? By evaluating the significance of his burial from a contemporary perspective, I do not mean to erase the individual importance of his life. However, the question begs asking when considering Tongan participation on behalf of U.S. and British forces in the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan in the 21st century. What does his passing and interment in Palestine say about the geographies of militarization and can these geographies of violence be remapped into generative alliances?⁴⁸ I

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴⁴ Sione Taliuli, "Causality Form-Active Service, 1918," Archives New Zealand, Archway Record, accessed November 20, 2018.
http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE10308730

⁴⁵ Liava'a, 36.

⁴⁶ Taliuli, "Causality Form-Active Service, 1918."

⁴⁷ Kainga means family, but also includes extended family and close family friends

⁴⁸ Ideas based on discussions with coordinators and contributors to the "(Re)Mapping Indigenous and Settler Geographies in the Pacific Conference," October 19-20, 2018, at the University of

pose these questions without any answers but ask them in order to probe the politics of remembrance and to wonder how past violence can become generative in contemporary conversations.

Hehea Sina Faletau proudly remembered her grandfather's service in WWI and her father's service during WWII when she called into Kaniva Tonga Radio Programme.⁴⁹ Her grandfather, Sateki Veikune Faletau was a medical student in Tonga when he joined the Maori contingent in 1916, but he was discharged shortly after in 1917 when he caught pneumonia while in England.⁵⁰ Fortunately, Faletau survived and reenlisted in 1919, until he was discharged in 1920.⁵¹ In 1936 he became the Honorable 'Akua'ola Sateki Veikune Faletau and was Governor of Vava'u until 1939. He was also the Minister for Police from 1939-1952.⁵² During WWII Faletau went on to become Lieutenant-Colonel of the Tongan Defence Force.⁵³ Faletau's service during WWI was his first step in a life-long career of military and public service. His legacy continues to make his family and his country proud.

Sateki Faletau's military file lists his nearest of kin as his father John (probably Sione) Faletau who was living in Neiafu Tonga, although Sateki's birth place is listed as Nuku'alofa.⁵⁴ Neiafu Tonga is in Vava'u, and the district which sits next to the coveted Neiafu harbor, that the British cited as their reasoning behind making Tonga a protectorate in 1901.

Hawai'i at Mānoa. In conversation with PhD Candidate in American Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Katherine Achacoso and M.A. Candidate in Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Patricia Tupou.

⁴⁹ Kalino Latu, "Tongans Remember Volunteers from the Islands who Served in First World War," *Kaniva Tonga News*, April 23, 2018, <https://kanivatonga.nz/2018/04/tongans-remember-volunteers-from-the-islands-who-served-in-first-world-war/>.

⁵⁰ In Tongan language it is common to put the word "fale" meaning building or house in front of a verb or noun to describe a place. Sateki Faletau's last name can possibly be translated as the house/place of war or fighting, because war and fight are some of the translations for the word tau. His name is interesting since he served in both World Wars and his son also served in WWII, which potentially reflects a familial connection to service.

⁵¹ Sateki Faletau, "Casualty Form-Active Service, 1917," Archives New Zealand, Archway Record, accessed November 20, 2018. http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE13981940

⁵² Liava'a, *Valiant Volunteers*, 21.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Sateki Faletau, "New Zealand Expeditionary Force, Military History Sheet, 1916," Archives New Zealand, Archway Record, accessed November 20, 2018. http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE13981940.

British officials saw Neiafu harbor as an ideal military base, which could potentially serve as a harbor for the Germans to launch an attack on Fiji. While the association between Neiafu and Faletau's military career most likely bore little literal significance in the past, it is interesting to conceptualize this symbolically. During the Tongan civil wars of the 19th century, there was no one particular harbor from which Tāufa'āhau or his challengers launched their attacks. In fact, Tāufa'āhau was from Ha'apai, and began his military campaign from there. However, after the consolidation of the monarchy and the British, German, French and American establishments of Pacific colonies in the late 19th century, the Neiafu harbor became synonymous with the military in the eyes of imperialists. The imperial gaze's militarized interpretation of Vava'u's harbor was the main cause in the establishment of the protectorate; in other words, militarism has threatened Tonga's sovereignty since 1901. The imperial gaze often vacillated between viewing Pacific Islands as romantic escapes into the past and empty spaces ideal for military testing and bases. These militarized understandings would eventually lead to the violent and destructive nuclear testing in Micronesia and Tahiti. Although Tonga's experience of militarization and colonialism differs drastically from other Pacific nations, it should not be excluded from critiques of Pacific militarization.

While these stories constitute only a handful of Tongans who either participated in WWI by joining the forces or by donating to war funds, even this small sample group suggests that the Tongan response to WWI was not uniform. They represent the varied backgrounds of those who did serve and demonstrate the wide array of Tongan experiences in the early 20th century. Furthermore, because Tonga did not have a military at this time, and because Tupou II did not heartily encourage Tongan enlistment in NZ, AU, or UK forces, only individuals who were truly interested joined. The largest direct impact that WWI had on Tonga was the decrease in trade. Although wartime made the price of copra sky-rocket, limited shipping and a few storms that devastated the islands prevented Tonga from profiting from the elevated prices.⁵⁵

On top of the economic difficulties that the war years brought to Tonga, Tupou II's health rapidly declined throughout 1917. King Tupou II died on April 5th, 1918, leaving his 18-year-old daughter, Sālote to assume the throne and the Tu'i Kanokupolu title.⁵⁶ Five months earlier, Sālote had married Tungī Mailefihi, the son of Tupou I's and II's greatest political rival,

⁵⁵ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 122.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

Tuku'aho. Tungī's genealogy would have made him the holder of the Tu'i Ha'atakalaua title, had Tupou I not rendered it defunct when he assumed kingship. As mentioned, Queen Sālote's genealogy made her the title holder of the Tu'i Kanokupolu, and on her mother's side she belonged to the Tu'i Tonga lineage. Through their marriage, all three of the most powerful chiefly lineages were united, thus quelling some of the most virulent political opposition to the Tupou dynasty.⁵⁷ Like her father and her great, great grandfather before her, Queen Sālote's rule would be one of firsts. She was the first woman to become a monarch in Tonga, and the first ruler to inherit Tonga's protectorate status. Her relationship with Britain and the Consul to Tonga was slightly less oppositional than her father's, and this more amicable relationship would prove impactful when Queen Sālote faced WWII.

Conclusion

The Tongan government did not formally participate in WWI, because Tonga's lack of a military prevented the nation from deploying troops via the state. However, it is hard to say if Tongan soldiers would have been deployed if the nation possessed a standing army at the time since Tonga's relationship with Britain was so strained at the war's onset. Tonga's participation in WWI is critical to understanding the nature of the Tongan military, because this early engagement in warfare on the global stage demonstrates how the Tongan government and public viewed outside conflict prior to the official creation of a military, and before the protectorate relationship between Tonga and Britain fully matured. As aforementioned, Tonga had only recently become a protectorate at the onset of WWI and had previously been in close business relations with Germany. German presence and power in Tonga had been waning since the 1899 partition of Samoa between the U.S. and Germany, when Britain agreed to release its claims to Samoa in exchange for Germany to leave Tonga.⁵⁸ There were many Germans living in Tonga at the onset of WWI; Germany was not a clear enemy to Tonga at the time. WWI served to solidify Britain's influence and control of Tonga, and by WWII Tongans quickly rallied to the support of the British and against Germany.

By creating a timeline of the changing attitudes in Tonga concerning warfare on the global stage, it then becomes easier to analyze the true purpose of the Tongan military. 19th

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Rutherford, *Shirley Baker*, 222.

century Tongan sovereignty, constructed under Tāufa‘āhau, was predicated upon European standards of governance and acceptance into the global political sphere via Euro-American powers. Therefore, to what degree did the Tongan government have to sacrifice indigenous modes of power and sovereignty just to be able to participate in the global politics? Furthermore, the Tongan military was not constructed to protect Tonga against foreign enemies, but rather to support Britain. With this in mind the question then becomes: is the Tongan military a proxy for UK, US, and AU interests? If the control of violence via the military and police is a central tenet of the modern nation state, then is Tonga’s sovereignty affected by contracting out their military to foreign nations? These questions will be explored in the following chapters. However, these questions and critiques should not belie the personal and patriotic motivations behind Tongan participation in WWI or WWII. Understanding and critiquing the mechanism of imperialism and militarization do not need to be understood as conflicting with the agency of islander soldiers. Rather both the pride of soldiers and their families along with the deeper political consequences of service are part of one complex system of nation-states, citizenship, policing, and violence that continues to function across the world and into the present.

Chapter III
Becoming Soldiers:
The Tongan Defence Force and World War II

At the end of the 19th century Tonga transformed from a complex indigenous empire into a bureaucratic nation-state, through military conquest under Tupou I and strategic political decisions made by Tupou I and II. With the advent of WWII, under the reign of Queen Sālote Tupou, the final piece in state formation, the creation of a military, took shape. Military prowess and pride were not new to Tonga, as mentioned in the previous chapter. However, a military comprised of soldiers from across the nation, who receive salaries and who fight on behalf of the nation differ from the closely bonded and loyal warriors of Tonga's past. I use the word "warrior" very cautiously in the context of Tonga and the broader Pacific. The Pacific male body has too often been fetishized and essentialized in into caricatures of warriors, and many Pacific cultures have been reduced and replicated in media in ways that solely focus on the might of traditional fighters without adequate attention to the complexities and richness of our cultures. I am using the term "warrior" to connote a political difference between service to a particular leader and an intimately known community versus a soldier who fights in allegiance to a state. In Tonga's case, in the 20th century, the state was entangled with the British Empire. Therefore, when the Tonga Defence Force [TDF] was formed it was made according to British standards and in order to fight under the direction of U.S. and British military leaders. In order to answer the question of who the Tongan military truly serves, we must look back to its creation during WWII.

It should be noted that the criticism of imperialism and militarization hold theoretical validity, but do not necessarily reflect the beliefs of the soldiers who joined the Tongan Defence Force in WWII or all Tongan government officials at the time. It is important to be critical of the military relationship Tonga has with the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Britain without negating the tremendous sacrifice Tongan soldiers and civilians have made in order to support these more powerful nations. Although the relationship is deeply problematic, Tongan soldiers continue to risk their lives to participate in military campaigns that do not directly threaten their homeland; this is a tremendous act of bravery and patriotism that cannot be over looked. While imperialism, largely informed the creation of the TDF, Tongans also volunteered to serve out of

pride, love for their Queen and country, and to protect Tonga from potential Japanese and German threats.

“Glory to-day in these young men who have given their lives in loyal service to the country. What true Tongan will not often speak of these Youths who struck the first blows at the enemy. Theirs was the blood which Tonga shed in the blood poured out by the Allied Nations for Right and Freedom.”¹

The Speaker of the Tongan Assembly, Nuku, was addressing the recent casualties suffered by a Tongan platoon, part of the First Fijian Commando Guerillas, at the Battle of Munda Point in the Solomon Islands during World War Two. His words embed Tongan soldiers’ sacrifices into the broader narratives of WWII which characterized the conflict as the ultimate battle between good and evil. In his speech, he mixes the blood of Tongans with the Allied Nations, which symbolically represents the way in which WWII served to fully enmesh Tonga into the global military industrial complex. From WWII forward, the Tongan military has only fought on behalf or alongside allied powers, regardless of whether the conflicts threatened Tonga. Tonga’s efforts during WWII have been greatly minimized, and in some cases erased. This invisibility masks a darker relationship that has been growing since WWII: Tonga’s growing dependence on and participation in U.S., Australian, and British military operations. In order to critique these more contemporary relationships, we must first give voice to Tongan service during WWII, which is where these strong and formal military relationships began. In hindsight the participation of Tonga in WWII seems inconsequential in comparison to larger and more affected nations’ contributions to such a massive war. However, by 1941 Japan controlled the northwestern Pacific and was moving quickly towards the south. Allied powers could not face the Japanese military without Pacific Islander soldiers, including Tongans.

The Pacific War began after Allied forces declared war on Germany, but political tensions in Asia and the Pacific had been mounting for decades. Japan had already gained German colonial holdings after World War One and controlled the Caroline, Marshall, and Northern Marianas Islands.² Further, Japanese military expansion commenced in 1931 when it began military campaigns to annex parts of Manchuria. Their advances sparked an international

¹ “The Honorable ,The Speaker, Nuku,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, September 9, 1943, 77.

² David L. Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia: Discourses over Development in a Pacific Territory, 1944-1982* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 2.

embargo, and strained Japan's already limited resources.³ By 1942 Japan occupied Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, which at the time was a French colony known as French Indochina.⁴ Shortly after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor the Japanese Army began attacks on the Philippines. Additionally, the Japanese military began encroaching upon Kiribati, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea. Japan occupied the northeast coast of Papua New Guinea by March of 1942.⁵ The Japanese Imperial Navy intended to take over Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, and Fiji, in order to cut Australia off from Allied support.⁶

Both Japan and Allied powers saw Pacific Islands as stepping-stones into enemy holdings and as buffers against military campaigns on their homelands.⁷ Japan and Allied forces began construction of air and naval bases in the Pacific, well before December 7th, 1941, but it was Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entry into WWII that sparked an all-out Pacific War.⁸ The U.S. controlled Guam, American Samoa, and Hawai'i as well as Johnston, Palmyra, Wake and Midway islands.⁹ Decades before the outbreak of World War II, British, New Zealand, and Australian colonies and protectorates in Oceania included: Samoa (1914), Australian Papua (1914), Kiribati (1892), Tuvalu (1892), Niue(1901), Pitcairn(1838/1902/1938), Tokelau(1916), Nauru (1919), Fiji (1874), Solomon Islands 1893/1900), Vanuatu (1906), and Tonga(1901).¹⁰

The Tongan government had changed its policy towards Britain since WWI. Unlike her father, Queen Sālote's relationship with the Western Pacific High Commission and the British Consul to Tonga was amicable, and she viewed Tonga's status as a protectorate as advantageous.¹¹ Her political decision to willingly accept British influence and advice served as a strategic measure to win over nobles who did not support her reign. The more support the Queen received from Britain, the more politically savvy she appeared to those who doubted

³ Judith A. Bennett, *Natives and Exotics: World War II and Environment in the Southern Pacific* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009), ProQuest Ebook, 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵ David Stevens, "The Naval Campaigns for New Guinea." *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, no. 34 (2001), para. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 3.

⁷ Bennett, *Natives and Exotics*, 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹ Gordon L. Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island Guide* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated, 2001), ProQuest Ebook, 34-35.

¹⁰ Bennett, *Natives and Exotics*, 29.; Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island*, 326.

¹¹ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 70.

her.¹² In her early reign, the young Queen formed a strong alliance with the Agent and Consul to Tonga, Islay McOwan. McOwan enjoyed a strong influence on Queen Sālote, but she did not follow his advice blindly, and at times rejected his suggestions.¹³ However, the close relationship between the Queen and Premier Tungī and the British Consul to Tonga often drew criticism from the government's dissenters who questioned "Where the Tongan government ends and where the British Agent & Consul begins."¹⁴ Dissenters were generally comprised of high ranking chiefs and nobles who felt their lines had claims to more land and power than they were allotted; many in the opposition also felt that Queen Sālote's and Tungī's reliance on British advice was offensive to Tongan sovereignty and to Tupou II's legacy of resisting British encroachments of power. Nevertheless, the Queen's decision to embrace British influence proved to legitimize her claims to power and potentially prevented further British intervention in Tonga. Even after McOwan's departure, his confidence in the Queen remained imprinted in the minds of WPHC officials. Although Queen Sālote's relationship with the British was more harmonious than her father's, the nature of the relationship was still rooted in British paternalism and distrust of indigenous governance.

Given the Queen's favorable stance on British influence, it is not surprising that her reaction to supporting Britain during WWII was much more enthusiastic than her father's reaction to WWI before her. On September 3rd, 1939 Tonga declared war on Germany. Queen Sālote called on her people to volunteer in support of the British and initiated the creation of the Tonga Defence Force.¹⁵ Enthusiasm for the Queen and the war effort was overwhelming, even elderly women clamored to join the TDF.¹⁶ The Queen's consort and Tonga's Premier, Prince Tungī Mailefihi was made colonel-in-chief. Until Premier Tungī Mailefihi's sudden passing in 1941, he oversaw the TDF and worked with the New Zealand Public Works Department on the construction of the Fua'amotu Airfield.¹⁷ At the onset of WWII, Queen Sālote gave 546 acres to Britain in order to build an airfield for the Royal New Zealand Air Force.¹⁸ Much of the

¹² Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 73.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 193.

¹⁷ Hornabrook, "New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force," 21.

¹⁸ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 195.

Fua'amotu airfield was built by hand and by volunteers. The first plane landed on the airfield on March 15th, 1940.¹⁹ This airbase was highly desirable and remained in use throughout the war.²⁰

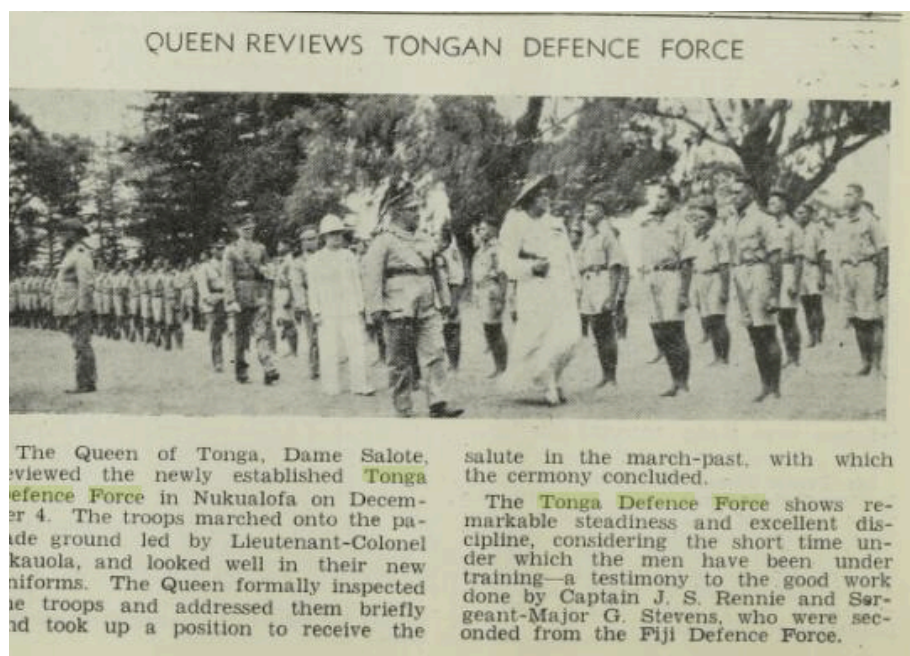


Fig. 3 “Queen Reviews Tongan Defence Force”

For the first year, Tongan soldiers and laborers were unpaid. Later, privates were paid five pence per day while lieutenants received two shillings.²¹ Tongan and Allied forces trained at Nukualofa College. Volunteers built *fales* for incoming soldiers from New Zealand, Australia, and later the U.S.²² Although Tongan women were unable to join the TDF, many volunteered to sew uniforms and assemble aid kits for their soldiers. Queen Sālote herself allocated 10% of her salary to the war effort, and the Tongan government donated £117,500 to the cause over the course of six years.²³ Although the Pacific war did not officially begin until December 7th, 1941, Tonga was deeply committed to the British war effort from the beginning of WWII. In Queen Sālote’s opening address to the 41st legislative assembly on June 26th, 1941, a few months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, she expressed her sincere concern:

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Hornabrook, “New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force,” 48.

²¹ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 193.

²² Hornabrook, “New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force,” 21.

²³ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 193.

“In regard to ourselves in Tonga, it is almost impossible for us truly grasp the difficulties that have engulfed the great nations, we do not know how we are to be really affected by them, apart altogether from the matter of trade. But whatever the future may have in store it is important that we have strength and will to meet it. We Polynesians are not strangers to steering the ship in turbulent seas and we are well aware that it can be done only by unity of purpose and fidelity, as is proved by Tonga retaining its independence to the present day.”²⁴

Her message contrasts from her father’s address at the opening of WWI. Tupou II’s speech focused on Tonga’s evasion of colonialism, and the uniqueness of Tongan sovereignty, and stressed that only through god’s will and Tonga’s treaty with England that Tonga remained safe.²⁵ Queen Sālote also emphasized the importance of Tonga’s independence, but instead of looking towards Britain for protection, she calls upon Tongans to face the challenges ahead. She also attributes Tonga’s retained domestic independence to Tongans themselves, rather than attributing it to god and the British, as her father did before her. Her Majesty also championed British and Allied power as promoters of peace, freedom, and Christian values. However, just as in her father’s speech before her, the reason to tout Tongan independence is because it had been threatened by European, especially British, imperialism.

Regardless of the previously contentious relationship between Tonga and Britain, the Tongan people were adamantly committed to supporting the British in their efforts, in ways that were exceedingly more visible than the Tongan reaction to WWI. This shift in policy was noted in Australian newspapers, one of which described Tonga as being famous for its declaration of neutrality during WWI.²⁶ Furthermore, many articles recognized and praised Tonga’s commitment to WWII. One paper describes Tonga’s war effort as such:

Although not forming an integral part of the British Empire, the protected Kingdom of Tonga is second to none in the support of the case for with the Empire is fighting...The Royal family has given the site of an aerodrome at Peppercorn Bend and the five miles of road giving access to it was constructed free of charge by the Tonga Government. Barracks to accommodate the defence force, which was raised on a purely voluntary basis after the war broke out, were built from materials provided free of cost by

²⁴“Address of Her Majesty Queen Sālote Tubou at the Opening of the Forty-first session of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga at Nukualofa on the 26th day of June, 1941,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, August 21, 1941.

²⁵“Opening of the 14th Assembly,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, January 15, 1915.

²⁶ “Tonga: A Pacific Paradise,” *Daily Mercury*, January 7, 1942.

the nobles and the people. Under the personal direction of Queen Sālote, the ladies of Tonga have made the defence force uniforms and presented them to the force.²⁷

From the descriptions of Tonga's efforts, it is clear that the whole of society, men, women, wealthy, and common, were mobilized and motivated to support allied powers. Despite the fact that Tonga's formal economy has never been tremendously robust and that the Great Depression had negatively impacted Tong's copra markets, the nation did not shy away from committing their best efforts and resources to the war cause. This generosity, loyalty, and commitment is reflective of some of the core values in Tongan culture which emphasizes the importance of supporting friends and family regardless of one's own financial circumstances. Tongan commitment to the war cause came before the threats to Tonga and the South Pacific were overtly present. The epitome of Tongan support and generosity is evident in their fundraising which generated enough money to purchase four fighter planes for the Royal Air Force.²⁸ Three were named after the royal family: the *Prince Tungi*, *Queen Sālote*, and *Tupou I*, two of which served in Europe.²⁹

Before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the advent of the Pacific War, many people living in the Pacific had hoped that the war would not spread to the region. They hoped the war would stimulate the economy, which had been badly wounded during the Great Depression.³⁰ However, once the Pacific War began, Japan made rapid and astounding victories in South East Asia and in the Pacific, which caused unprecedented alarm. One news article warned, "Until the Allies work out a co-ordinated plan of naval action against this extraordinary strategy there is not an island in the South Pacific, nor town in Australia, nor a point in the East Indies which may be regarded as safe from sporadic Japanese attacks."³¹

²⁷ "Tonga and the War: Voluntary Defence Force," *Kalgoorlie Miner*, February 5, 1941.

²⁸ "Fighter Plane," *Tongan Government Gazette*, April 10, 1941.

²⁹ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 210.

³⁰ "How Long Will This Hitler War Last?" *Pacific Islands Monthly: PIM*. September 15, 1939, Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1931-2000, <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-315282345/view?SectionId=nla.obj-329444300&searchTerm=how+long+will+this+hitler+war+last&partId=nla.obj-315294192#page/n4/mode/1up/search/how+long+will+this+hitler+war+last>.

³¹ "What This New War May Mean to Residents in Pacific," *Pacific Islands Monthly: PIM*. December 15, 1941, Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1931-2000, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-314899430>.

Tonga declared war on Japan on December 8, 1941, in solidarity with the U.S. and Britain and in response to the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. In 1942, New Zealand transferred responsibility and control for the “South Pacific Area,” which included Fiji and Tonga to the U.S. This move violated the Treaty of Protectorate between Tonga and Britain, but this violation was overlooked due to the serious threats in the region.³² According to Queen Sālote, an agreement was made between the U.S. and Tonga that entailed Tonga “providing water, land, wharfage facilities and houses...to accommodate the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force,” in return America, “agreed to evacuate her army from Tonga as soon as practicable after hostilities cease[d] ; to hand over free of cost any permanent works such as wharves, roads, harbor facilities, and aerodomes; and to respect the Sovereign rights and independence of the Kingdom of Tonga.”³³ On March 3rd, 1942 Operation Bleacher, the U.S. occupation of Tonga, took effect.³⁴

It is not surprising that many of the troops that spent time in Tonga during WWII would agree that, “of all the islands on which the battalion has served, Tongatapu was the most enjoyable.”³⁵ Although Tonga had not been called the Friendly Islands in many years, the name was often invoked to describe soldiers’ pleasant experiences in Tonga.³⁶ In addition to the 546 acres given to the British, the U.S. demanded 767 more acres to expand the airfield and set up a total of 13 camps around Tongatapu.³⁷ The primary naval base was stationed at Ma’ufanga, the Air Corps was at Fua’amotu, and the Construction Battalion was at Havelu. Tongans provided the war effort with their best materials and land. The Fua’amotu airbase was even constructed on a portion of Premier Tungī Mailefihi’s estate. Even further, another camp was built in Mu’a, the ancient capital of Tonga and burial place of over 22 Tongan chiefs.³⁸ At Mu’a, many ancestral

³² Hornabrook, “New Zealand and the Tonga Defence Force,” 49.

³³ “Address of Her Majesty Queen Sālote Tubou at the Opening of the Forty-second Session of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga at Nafualu on the 29th day of June, 1942,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, September 2, 1942, 1.

³⁴ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 203.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ H.E.L. Priday, *The War from Coconut Square; the Story of the Defence of the Island Bases of the South Pacific*, (Wellington N.Z.: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1945), 27.

³⁷ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 203.

³⁸ Oliver A. Gillespie and New Zealand Army Division, 3rd. Histories Committee, *Story of the 34th; the Unofficial History of a New Zealand Infantry Battalion with the Third Division in the Pacific*. (Wellington: A.H. and A.W. Reed, 1947), 44.

rulers have been interred in centuries old, coral stone, step pyramids called *langi*. In addition to access to the most desirable land, foreign troops enjoyed gathering at Ha‘amonga ‘a Maui, an ancient and sacred megalith.³⁹ As construction continued, foreign military men and bases physically overlapped the sacred geographies of Tongatapu. This overlap did not cover or erase the importance of these sites, but temporarily transformed the landscape in the service of foreign empire. Images of U.S. and NZ soldiers climbing on the Ha‘amonga ‘a Maui and sitting on the *langi* represent the entanglements of militarism, empire, and indigenous lives and landscapes that were at their peak in Tonga during WWII.⁴⁰

As formal operations intensified so did Tongan volunteer work. On top of dances and fundraising sales, Queen Sālote created a theater company, Hengihengi’a Tonga. The company preformed traditional Tongan legends and fictional war scenarios in order to raise funds for the Red Cross.⁴¹ Through their charity efforts Tongans raised £5,450 for the Red Cross, £7,400 for various war efforts, and £1525 for the Tonga Defence Force Comforts Fund that sent treats and extra rations for Tongan soldiers overseas.⁴² Over fifty Tonga Defence Soldiers would fight overseas, including the Queen’s nephew Vaea ‘Alipate Tupou who flew Catalinas with the Royal New Zealand Air Force.⁴³

While many sources suggest that the foreign soldiers generally enjoyed their time in Tonga, aside from the complaints over fleas and humidity, there is much to suggest that Tongans had mixed if not negative experiences with foreign soldiers, especially with U.S. soldiers.⁴⁴ A side effect of the war was an influx of cash and wage labor jobs. Women and men both seized the opportunity to join the new and suddenly transformed cash economy. A common and lucrative job for women was a laundress, men got jobs supporting the military, and many households made and sold *hopi*, home-brewed alcohol.⁴⁵ The foreign service men brought a time of excitement and prosperity, but the Tongan government was concerned about this sudden market boom and cautioned the public against becoming reliant on wage labor and neglecting

³⁹ Gillespie, *Story of the 34th*, 44.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴¹ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 194.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 343.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁴⁴ Gillespie, *Story of the 34th*, 43.

⁴⁵ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 213.

their agricultural work. Queen Sālote was especially concerned about this fact stating, “I seriously advise the chiefs and the leaders of our country to spare no efforts in encouraging agriculture and more stable sources of our national wealth.”⁴⁶

Despite the government’s warnings, the excitement and new opportunities were too enticing for everyone to simply ignore. Social gatherings, dances, and *hopi* were at the center of many Tongan- U.S. conflicts and accidents.⁴⁷ However, the most infamous confrontation was called the Great Cigarette Raid, which took place in August of 1944.⁴⁸ 600 gallons of oil, 32 beer cases, and 72 cigarette cases were stolen from the naval base in Ma‘ufanga. U.S. soldiers immediately took it upon themselves to retaliate by blocking the roads, terrorizing households, and arresting Tongans they perceived to be suspicious.⁴⁹ They even broke in to Premier Ata’s home and threatened his family.⁵⁰ In total they arrested 40 men, although only 8 Tongan men were eventually prosecuted. The stolen goods were never fully recovered.⁵¹ Many of the U.S. troops stationed in Tonga were from the South and had little regard for Tongans’ rights. The U.S. Navy silenced complaints by minimally compensating innocent people who had been targeted and by replacing the officer in charge of the raid.⁵²

Queen Sālote remained relatively silent on the matter, perhaps due to threats of martial law being instated in Tonga. In fact, before he was replaced, Commander R.P. Hodsdon threatened to declare martial law but he was promptly reminded that his men had just attacked a loyal British protectorate and that he had no authority to do so.⁵³ These events suggest that although martial law was not officially declared, the U.S. military was the dominant political power in Tonga during the war years.⁵⁴ U.S. actions in Tonga were ultimately forgiven, but they

⁴⁶ “Address of Her Majesty Queen Sālote Tupou at the Opening of the Forty-third Session of the legislative Assembly of Tonga at Nuku’alofa on the 24th day of June, 1943,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, September 9, 1943.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*

⁴⁸ Weeks, “The United States Occupation of Tonga”, 419.

⁴⁹ Elizabeth Wood-Ellem, “Behind the Battle Lines: Tonga in World War II,” in *Echoes of Pacific War*, 19.

⁵⁰ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 215.

⁵¹ *Ibid*.

⁵² Wood-Ellem, “Behind the Battle Lines,” 20.

⁵³ Weeks, “The United States Occupation of Tonga,” 421.

⁵⁴ Wood-Ellem, “Behind the Battle Lines,” 20.

clearly violated the agreement that the U.S. made with Queen Sālote at the onset of Operation Bleacher. The Great Cigarette Raid was just one of many incidents of U.S. soldiers violating Tongan rights. At the close of WWII, and on top of these aggressions, the U.S. attempted to bill Tonga for services they had previously agreed would be free.⁵⁵ When Tonga refused to pay for the equipment that the U.S. no longer needed, instead of giving Tonga the equipment, they pushed it into the wharf and burned the buildings they abandoned.⁵⁶

During the war, as tensions rose and fell at home, two platoons of Tongan soldiers left to train and fight along Allied forces in the Solomon Campaign. Fifty TDF soldiers left Tonga and fought with Fijians, Americans, and New Zealanders in Guadalcanal, New Georgia, and Bougainville. The Pacific had been keenly aware of Japan's creeping power in the region, but the bombing of Pearl Harbor signaled a turning point in the war effort. New Zealand and Australia, unlike the U.S., had been deeply involved in the war since its advent and were unable to adequately redirect soldiers and resources to the Pacific War.⁵⁷ Despite being short on resources, Japan's bases in the Solomon Islands and in New Guinea posed too great of a threat to ignore. Guerilla forces were seen as the most viable option in the face of an ever-expanding war.

The First Commando Fiji Guerillas were comprised of skilled Fijian, Solomon Islander, Tongan, and New Zealander soldiers.⁵⁸ Commandos in Fiji were extremely effective and skilled in their knowledge of combat as well as navigating the harsh and humid tropical environments in the South Pacific.⁵⁹ Throughout 1941 and 1942, the threat of an assault on Fiji as well as on Tonga seemed imminent. It was not until the U.S. victory at the Battle of Coral Sea in early May 1942 and later at the Battle of Midway in early June that the capacity of the Japanese Navy to launch an assault on more South Pacific Islands greatly diminished.⁶⁰

With the threat diverted, the First Commando Fiji Guerillas joined the U.S. in the Solomon Islands Campaign.⁶¹ The campaign began in August of 1942 and lasted until December

⁵⁵ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 216.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 217.

⁵⁷ Colin R. Larsen, *Pacific Commandos: New Zealanders and Fijians in Action: A History of Southern Independent Commando and First Commandos Fiji Guerillas*, (Wellington: Reed, 1946), 16.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

1943.⁶² Japanese bases in the Solomon Islands marked the furthest reaches of the rapidly expanding Japanese empire. The Japanese established a formidable base at Rabaul in New Britain, in the Bismarck Archipelago. The Rabaul base served as the epicenter of the Japanese offensive in the Solomons and in Papua New Guinea.⁶³ In January 1942, the Japanese military began bombing the Solomon Islands, and by July of 1942 the Japanese completed construction of an airbase on Guadalcanal.⁶⁴ Once Japan secured the Solomons, their plan was to move on Papua New Guinea and to launch an offensive on New Caledonia, Fiji, and Samoa to sever U.S.-Australia supply lines.⁶⁵ In August of 1942, the U.S. sent 11,000 Marines to Guadalcanal and Tulagi in order to destroy the Japanese airbase.⁶⁶ The Solomon Campaign lasted over a year and caused 23,800 Japanese casualties and 1,600 U.S. casualties.⁶⁷

Although the Japanese defeat at Midway stymied their plans to extend further into the South Pacific, their bases in the Solomons remained pertinent for their continued campaign to secure New Guinea. Allied action in the Solomons and later in the Bismarcks ultimately enabled U.S. and Australian forces to successfully regain control of New Guinea. While many suggest that it was the Battle at Midway, that marked the turning point in the war, it was also the multiple successes of the Solomon Campaign that began the course of Allied victories in the Pacific.

The success of the Solomon Campaign, and the Pacific War overall, was greatly dependent upon indigenous support and soldiers. U.S. soldiers proved ill equipped to maneuver the thick and humid forests of the Solomons. Fijian and Solomon Islander scouts, leaders, and translators proved invaluable to the campaign. Tongan soldiers proved especially good at coast watching and locating marine mines as well as quickly traveling between islands and traversing along the dangerous and crocodile infested rivers.⁶⁸ Without support from indigenous soldiers and volunteers the Pacific front could have been lost to Japan. Despite the necessity of indigenous support, they were consistently paid less than their white counterparts and top

⁶² Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island*, 27.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁶⁶ Anna Annie Kwai, *Solomon Islanders in World War II: An Indigenous Perspective*, (ANU Press: Canberra, 2017), 6. ee

⁶⁷ *Ibid*

⁶⁸ Bennett, *Natives and Exotics*, 138.; Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 108, 109, 111.

commanders were predominantly white.⁶⁹ Representations of Solomon Islander support of the British during WWII has often been simplified as unwavering loyalty of indigenous islanders to their British colonizers, but as in the case of Tonga, the relationship between the British and Solomon Islanders was complex. Many islanders joined out of feelings of obligation and fear of punishment.⁷⁰ Tongan soldiers joined out of loyalty to Queen and country and anxieties over the war's potential threat to Tonga, but their willingness to fight under the guidance of British, New Zealand, and U.S. leaders was based in an imperial framework that had been cultivated over four decades. Furthermore, Pacific islands were threatened, because imperial powers used them as stepping stones in larger military strategies.

While WWII weaponry and military strategy was more lethal and more diverse than ever before, the deadliest forces during the Solomon Campaign and across the South Pacific was the environment itself. The Solomon Islands' climate is extremely moist, generally sitting at about 80% humidity, rain is especially frequent from November to May, and the temperature ranges from 70° to 90° F.⁷¹ All four types of malaria thrive in New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Malaria caused significantly more casualties than combat itself.⁷² Additionally filariasis, typhus, and dengue fever, caused by parasites, mites, and mosquitos were incredibly pervasive and debilitating.⁷³ The wet, dense forests of the Southwest Pacific are ripe grounds for mosquitos and parasites, and treacherous grounds for combat.

The first group of TDF soldiers to join the First Commando Fiji Guerillas was led by Lieutenant Henry Taliai as well as New Zealander, Lieutenant Benjamin Masefield.⁷⁴ They landed on Guadalcanal on April 19, 1943. The troops were tasked with combing the lush and mountainous island in search of remaining Japanese soldiers.⁷⁵ The bulk of Japanese force had been diminished a month earlier at the Battle of Guadalcanal. Still the Solomon Islands Campaign was far from over. Japanese losses at Midway and Guadalcanal had not stopped their efforts in New Guinea, Kiribati (then the Gilbert Islands,) nor in the Philippines.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 25.

⁷⁰ Kwai, *Solomon Islanders in World War II*, 51.

⁷¹ Bennett, *Natives and Exotics*, 50.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 51.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁷⁴ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 89.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷⁶ Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island Guide*, 25.

After nearly three months on Guadalcanal, the First Fiji Commandos arrived in New Georgia on July 2, 1943.⁷⁷ The primary objective of the New Georgia offensive, Operation Order, was to capture the Munda Airbase.⁷⁸ After securing the nearby islands of Baraulu, Sasavele, and Roviana, the Tongan platoon joined an American battalion on the main island, New Georgia.⁷⁹ Operation Order lasted 35 days, 25 days longer than anticipated. The operation's strategy was to travel and create a nearly half kilometer front along the western side of the Barike River, and then to push towards the Munda Airbase.⁸⁰ This was especially challenging due to New Georgia's dense forest and lack of roads apart from local footpaths. Additionally, Munda is protected geographically by sharp reefs and the narrow Hathorn Strait.⁸¹ The Japanese built the Munda Airbase in November of 1942, and it served as an essential point for the support and defense of Japan's Rabaul and Guadalcanal bases as well as for their Solomon offensive.⁸²

The Tongan platoon of the First Commando Fiji Guerillas, led by Lieutenant Henry Taliai and Lieutenant Benjamin Masefield, joined the initial U.S. troop and trekked up the Barike River on July 4th 1943.⁸³ The following morning, the troop found their camp was neighboring a Japanese camp.

“The Tongans and the Japanese realised what had happened at the same time and both parties took cover to give themselves time to size up the situation. In taking cover a Tongan and a Japanese dived behind the same tree. In the excitement of the moment the Japanese was not quite sure what nationality the Tongan was so he asked the Tongan whether he was Japanese or American. The Tongan wasted no time in answering with a bullet. The rest of the Japanese withdrew at the sound of the shot and the Tongans returned to the Battalion's headquarters.”⁸⁴

This startling and violent encounter would be the first of many in the long and hard-fought Operation Order. On July 5th, 1943 Lieutenant Taliai and Lieutenant Masefield joined 12 Americans on the Munda Trail to set up headquarters further inland along the Barike River. Unfortunately, the Japanese military had anticipated their move inland and ambushed them less

⁷⁷ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 104.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁸¹ Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island Guide*, 121.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 123.

⁸³ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 111.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

than a mile into their mission.⁸⁵ The troops organized themselves with the Americans in the middle while the commandos took the flanks; the Commandos were often put in the most dangerous and difficult positions. They avoided firing in order to optimize stealth.

“Visibility was limited to less than ten yards in this part of the jungle...The commandos had trained themselves to shoot only when they had something to shoot at and their silence had the Japanese bluffed...they threw everything they had at the commandos- there were grenades and rifle and machine gun bullets everywhere- it seemed amazing that anyone could avoid being hit with so much lead flying about.”⁸⁶

The First Commando Fiji Guerillas’ strategy differed drastically from the U.S. policy of “go[ing] forward behind a blaze of fire.” Instead the Commandos moved quietly and carefully, and they strategically used grenades to get behind the foliage that protected enemies from rifle fire.⁸⁷ The next day, July 6th, the soldiers set up camp in enemy territory just behind the Munda Airfield; unfortunately the Japanese troops spotted them, surrounded the Commandos, cut their communication lines and “showered the area with lead.”⁸⁸ This was the day that the Munda Battle began, the second major offensive in the Solomon Campaign, and the day that Sergeant Sione Inukia’angana and Private Simote Vea Mahe earned their Silver Stars and Military Medals for “gallant and distinguished services in the South West Pacific.”⁸⁹ The *Tongan Government Gazette* celebrated their soldiers recognition,

“Private Vave and several Americans were wounded, but Sergeant Sione InukiHa’angana and Private S.V. Mahe continued to engage the enemy...and when the United States Company withdrew each of them carried back a wounded American under fire. Their conduct and coolness under fire was an inspiration to all.”⁹⁰

Pacific Islands Monthly described Sergeant Sione Inukia’angana’s feat in greater detail,

A sergeant in the South Pacific Scouts (American name for the Fiji battalion, that is serving overseas), Jione Inukiha’ Agana who comes from Nukualofa, Tonga has been awarded the American Silver Star. The decoration is for gallantry in action on New Georgia Island in the Solomons, on July 19 last year.

⁸⁵ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 112.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁸⁹ *Supplement to The London Gazette*, February 17, 1944. #36382

⁹⁰ “Awards,” *Tonga Government Gazette*, May 16^e, 1944.

Sgt. Agana saw two or three Japanese making directly for a wounded American soldier, he killed the Japanese and then under heavy enemy fire, successfully evacuated the injured man.⁹¹

Both InukiHa‘anga and Mahe were clearly deeply committed to the war cause and risked their lives to save American soldiers.

Although there are many stories of success, the Tongan platoon of the First Commando Fiji Guerillas was not without setbacks and casualties. By the 8th of July the American battalion was out of rations, but the Commandos shared what they had with them. Rations and the wounded were carried up and down the river in Solomon Islander canoes and with their support until the Americans facilitated the conversion of the Munda trail into a road fit for vehicles.⁹² The initial successes of the Munda Battle stagnated “to a war of attrition with no spectacular successes.”⁹³ The stall in advancement caused more soldiers to contract malaria, and the Japanese adopted night attacks to push back the Americans and commandos, leaving the soldiers sleepless and paranoid. The first Commando to succumb to enemy attacks was a Fijian named Sailosi, who was killed at night on July 10th.⁹⁴ The next to fall was Lieutenant Masefield himself. While leading a Tongan scouting troop further along the Munda Trail, the team found enemy machine guns and as they were returning to report their findings they were subject to friendly fire, which unfortunately killed Lieutenant Masefield. On the 12th Lieutenant Henry Taliai and Uraia, a Fijian soldier, were killed during one of many small patrol missions that the commandos were often put in charge of. These small patrols greatly helped the Allied advancement, and the Commandos often served as scouts and spearheads for the larger American battalion.⁹⁵ The Commando’s position as scouts and flanks for the U.S. Army speaks both to the troops bravery and to U.S. and NZ leaders disregard for islander lives. Indigenous bodies, intelligence, and homelands were utilized to fight an imperial war.

Lieutenant Masefield and Lieutenant Taliai were greatly loved and admired by their troops and their passing was a devastating blow to the Commandos. To this day, Tonga’s naval

⁹¹ “Tongan Receives US Decoration,” *Pacific Islands Monthly: PIM*, March 20, 1944. Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1931. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-314899430>

⁹² Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 118.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 119.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 126, 129.

base is called Masfield Naval Base and their military camp is called Taliai Camp.⁹⁶ A story in *Pacific Islands Monthly* about Fijian and Tongan soldiers in the Solomons ran on September 17th, 1943 and featured a large picture of Lieutenant Taliai.



Fig. 4 The caption reads: “First Lieutenant Henry Taliai, who was killed in action recently in the Solomons, was the first Tongan to make the supreme sacrifice in this war. His father, three sister and two brothers are a well-known church-loving family. Taliai was a keen footballer. He represented Tonga in the Tonga-Fiji test matches, in Tonga as well as in Suva.” Photo by Hettig.

The Munda Airfield was officially captured on August 5th, 1943, after an exhausting 35-day campaign. The Munda Airfield was extended and converted into an important Allied base.⁹⁷ After the success of the Solomon Campaign, the Allies could finally move on to the Japanese Rabaul base. On January 23, 1942 Japan had occupied Rabaul on the island of New Britain, which is part of the Bismarck Archipelago.⁹⁸ This base was the primary support station for Japan’s attacks on New Guinea and for their initial plan of invading Port Moresby. New Guinea

⁹⁶ “NZ Chief of Navy Visits Tonga,” Ministry of Information and Communications, www.mic.gov.to (April 24, 2017).

⁹⁷ Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island Guide*, 127.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

and the Bismarcks were seen as strategic holds from which the Japanese could threaten Australia and sever communication between Australia and Indonesia (at the time the Dutch East Indies.) In order to attack this vital base, the Allies began with an assault on the island of Bougainville.

Japan had occupied Bougainville since March 1942 and by 1943 over 38,000 Japanese forces were well established in and around the island.⁹⁹ The U.S. constructed a base at Empress Augusta Bay on November 1st, 1943.¹⁰⁰ Although the First Commando Fiji Guerillas were disbanded shortly after the New Georgia Campaign, a new group of Tongan soldiers joined the 3rd Battalion Fiji Infantry Regiment in the Bougainville Campaign on March 3rd 1944.¹⁰¹ Tevita Fusi, a Tongan soldier in the battalion received a Military Medal during the Bougainville Campaign.¹⁰² The soldiers of the Bougainville Campaign faced similar challenges to those in the Solomon Campaign. The terrain was equally as rugged, and malaria was rampant. Japanese formal surrender at Bougainville finally came on August 21st, 1945, less than a month before the Pacific War officially ended on September 2nd, 1945. The campaigns that followed the Solomon and Bougainville Campaigns are far better known. In brief, while the New Georgia assault was underway Australia began its offensive in Papua New Guinea [PNG], in November 1943 the U.S. began assaults in the Gilberts (Kiribati,) and by 1944 the U.S. was fighting in the Marshalls.¹⁰³ In June 1944, the U.S. won the Battle of Philippine Sea and aggressively attacked Japanese strongholds in the Marianas.¹⁰⁴ By 1945, the U.S. was in Okinawa, and in May Germany surrendered. Australian forces continued to fight in New Guinea as well as in Indonesia, and by July the U.S. took back the Philippines. And of course, the war came to a tragic and infamous end with the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August of 1945.¹⁰⁵

The contributions of Tongan soldiers to the Allied war effort comprise just a small portion of the many indigenous Pacific contributions, but they were no less brave. U.S. efforts

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 139.

¹⁰¹ Shaun Aumua, "Tongan Defence Force WWII," *The Volunteers*, Vol. 30 No.1, September 10, 2010, <https://issuu.com/nzmhs/docs/nzmhs>, 28.

¹⁰² "Roll of Honour-Section II," *Pacific Islands Monthly: PIM*, November 16, 1945, (Sydney: Pacific Publications, 1931), 7.

¹⁰³ Rottman, Gordon L., *World War II Pacific Island Guide*, 27.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

are often credited as being the determining force that ended the Pacific War and ended Japanese imperialism in the Pacific, but without indigenous support navigating the dense jungles of the South Pacific, assisting in food production and cultivation, as well as participating in war infrastructure construction, Allied efforts would not have been as swift and effective as they were. Ironically, it was Allied Power and imperialism that had colonized and exploited many of the nations that were so deeply affected by the Pacific War the century leading up to it. Tongans, Fijians, Papuans, Solomon Islanders all fought alongside Allied Forces in the South Pacific. To the Allies, islands were seen as pawns and buffers against attacks on their lands. However, for the indigenous soldiers of the Pacific, they fought for their homes, in a war waged between imperial powers. With these contradictions at play, Tongan loyalty and enthusiasm seems conflicting, but Tongan unwavering loyalty and commitment to their countrymen, neighbors, and allies is undeniably commendable.

Money and territory are common topics in the discussion of militarization. Militarization in the Pacific is often relegated to the discussion of military bases, most of them owned and operated by the U.S. From the U.S. and Australia perspective, Pacific islands continue to represent strategic military pawns rather than the cherished homelands of millions of people. It is also clear that there is a deep interest in the militarization of the Pacific male body. Many scholars have addressed the issue of military masculinity in the Pacific, but most focus on Chamorro, Maori, Fijian, and Kanaka Maoli identities. Although Tonga was never formally colonized in the way many island nations continue to be, the exploitation and fetishization of Tongan male bodies in the interest of warfare is no less present.

In early 1941 while Allies were determining where to setup bases:

Lieutenant-Colonel John McLeod, M.C...Found the Tongans keen to make good soldiers, and they took to drill and manoeuvres like ducks to water, New Zealanders have a flair for getting the best of Polynesians races, for they know that, as with their own Maoris, the blood of warriors and gentlemen flows in their native veins.¹⁰⁶

Tongans, as well as other Polynesians were touted as being desirable because they were strong and brave but also submissive. Instead of seeing indigenous soldiers as equal partners, white officers viewed them more like one of the many weapons in the military's advancing arsenals—

¹⁰⁶ Friday, *The War from Coconut Square*, 27.

Polynesians were dangerous and desirable but needing of white direction in order to be useful.¹⁰⁷ Similar attitudes are reflected in today's politics as Pacific nations who assist the U.S. and Australia are viewed as brave warrior forces, while those that challenge the status quo of power are labeled threats, such as the militants in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Additionally, Tongans are still represented as having an essential and dangerous warrior quality. This representation is apparent in the military as well as in sports, especially rugby and football. While this stereotype may seem favorable in the context of war and sports, it is detrimental to the well-being of young Tongan men especially those living in the diaspora who are subject to racism and racial profiling.

Although Tongan involvement in international warfare is highly problematic and is essentially a symptom of a continually unbalanced power structure in the Pacific, Tongans willingly participate in these affairs and many are proud of their military service. Tongan men are compelled to join the military for a variety of reasons including patriotism and belief in their cause, but many enlist for an opportunity at economic mobility.¹⁰⁸ Even the Tongan government sees Tongan participation in international military affairs as lucrative. Essentially contracting out Tongan military forces is a short-term solution to a systemic problem, and the long-term effects of military relationships with major world powers could ultimately compromise Tongan sovereignty. Contracting out Tongan soldiers to any military campaign that would prove to be the most lucrative also contributes to the militarization and commodification of Pacific bodies.

Moreover, such close relationships with volatile and powerful nations could turn Tonga into a de facto U.S. or Australian military base. Additionally, if the various nations who now support the Tongan military ever find themselves opposed to one another, this could prove politically dangerous for Tonga. These military relationships have already caused Tongan citizens to be subject to the harshness of warfare in conflicts that have nothing to do with Tonga or the South Pacific in general. A nation having a standing military in order to protect its own

¹⁰⁷ Rottman, *World War II Pacific Island Guide*, 133.

¹⁰⁸ Don Wiseman, "Tonga's Afghanistan Deployment Completed- What's Next?," *Radio New Zealand*, May 12, 2014.
<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/programmes/datelinepacific/audio/2595385/tonga-s-afghanistan-deployment-completed-what-s-next>

interests and sovereignty is understandable, but the generally peaceful condition of Tonga's politics makes their forces more relevant to foreign interests than Tonga's own.

This military dependence leaves Tonga subject to other nation's destructive military industrial complexes. Perhaps the most chilling critique of war comes from Sergeant Colin R. Larsen and his account of the New Georgia campaign:

Jungle warfare becomes a very personal affair between yourself and the enemy, who is so close at times the you can almost see the white of his eyes. If you catch sight of his face once, the features are indelibly printed on your mind; and if you see it a second time it seems that you have known the man for years. In fact jungle warfare is so much of a man to man affair, that it strikingly reveals the true nature of war-murder.¹⁰⁹

Larsen's quote is a powerful reminder that although war can be profitable, it comes at a grave expense. Tonga's partnership and growing dependence on military powers is a danger to Tongan individuals, families, sovereignty as well as to global peace.

¹⁰⁹ Larsen, *Pacific Commandos*, 122.

Chapter IV
Tonga, Money, and Militarization:
A Kingdom within the Global Military Industrial Complex

A typical and concrete understanding of militarization and its motivations can be summarized as, “the hallmark of militarism is the lust for war.”¹ This lust is caused by depoliticization, and conceptualizing war on purely ideological terms, in which the “other” poses an existential threat to a particular world-view. Therefore, absolving the aggressor of considering the ethical and moral consequences of waging war. This instead creates a crusade of ‘good’ against ‘evil.’² War becomes a “precisely “‘altruistic’ pursuit... that generates militarism and leads to the systematic undermining of every limit placed upon war.”³ The only conclusion available to such severe logic is total hegemony. However, to understand Tonga’s participation in foreign military campaigns as a full incorporation into U.S. hegemony, belies the political complexity of the Pacific and the large degree of sovereignty Tonga possesses. A more applicable understanding of militarization in the Pacific, is posed by Sasha Davis in *Empires Edge* (2015) which views U.S. posturing in the Pacific as a means to protect “vital systems” rather than “defending territory and perpetuating the state against opposition.”⁴ Since the Pacific is a “critical space of a transnational economic system,” the U.S. is compelled to protect it due to the state’s reliance on “capitalist accumulation and neoliberal trade policies.”⁵ Having a strong military presence in the region allows the U.S. to dictate trade and defend “‘the system’ from all threats, environmental, military, and political.”⁶ The U.S. is a leader in this pursuit, however, Australia, in recent years, has taken a larger role in militarizing the Pacific. Thus, I will argue that Tonga’s growing presence in U.S. and Australian military efforts is also a product of such militarization. Max Weber argues in his foundational text, *Politics as a Vocation*, “a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical

¹ A.J. Coates, *The Ethics of War*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 43.

² *Ibid.*, 48.

³ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴ Davis, *Empires’ Edge*, 14.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

force within a given territory.”⁷ Tonga is not a democracy but rather a constitutional monarchy. This raises the concern as to whether the Tongan military is in service of the state or of the sovereign. I will explore this particular issue by discussing the Tongan military’s role in quelling the 2006 Democracy Riots. If we consider Weber’s argument, that violence and the state are intimately intertwined, then Tonga’s utilization of their military should be an expression of sovereignty. Therefore, it is imperative to know what motivates Tonga to participate in foreign military campaigns, especially when we consider Tonga’s participation in campaigns in places as far away as Iraq or Afghanistan - over 13,000 miles from Tonga - that have made no direct threats to the safety of Tonga or its citizens. Tonga’s participation in such distant and dangerous campaigns suggests that Tonga’s actions are less indicative of sovereignty and state power. Instead, these efforts suggest a drive towards economic imperialism, whereby Tonga is dependent on militaristic nations for support, and therefore becomes enmeshed in foreign wars.

If complete control of violence is an expression of state sovereignty, what is the nature of a state that utilizes this power predominately to serve foreign interests? Following WWII Tonga has faced no serious direct military threats; yet their military remains active. In this chapter, I consider who or what Tonga is fighting by looking at His Majesty’s Armed Forces (HMAF) participation in the Iraq and Afghanistan War. I also consider HMAF participation in RAMSI (Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands), and in calming the 2006 Democracy Riots in Nuku’alofa. From this perspective, we see the projection of Tongan military power from the outside in. Later in the chapter, I delineate Tonga’s foreign military engagements geographically and based on proximity. By funneling the engagements in this way (as opposed to chronologically) I hope to construct an image of a militarized geography that better demonstrates the impact of foreign militarization on Tonga. The geographic shape of this chapter is a decrescendo which begins by outlining the furthest reaches that Tongan soldiers have been pulled into and ends within Tonga. By ending in Tonga, we can re-center in order to consider the future of the Tongan military.

Although Tongan soldiers have participated in many training exercises with foreign militaries, the engagements mentioned in this chapter represent the most significant actions since Tonga’s independence in 1970. With the loosening of Britain’s reins on Tonga’s international

⁷ Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 2.

affairs, Tonga's foreign policy has become entirely their own. Tonga was never formally colonized, but its position as a British protectorate severely limited the nation's sovereignty. Therefore, the rapid legal and economic changes that Tonga experienced after independence can still be seen as a "state-formation" process, because the kingdom still needed to adjust politically and economically in order to exercise its newfound, full sovereignty. As Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett so poignantly describe, "third World state-formation has often proceeded on a dependent basis, conditioned by relations of economic, political, and/or cultural subordination to individual Great Powers or to the world-system as a whole."⁸ This dependency skews the state-formation process in favor of foreign interests and incentivizes elites to focus on appealing and appeasing donor states over their own citizens. There is strong evidence to suggest that Tonga has also been subject to subordination towards "Great Powers," which has thusly impacted the kingdom's "state-formation" process and continues to inform its foreign policy.

Tonga's road to independence was long, but peaceful. In 1958 Tonga and Britain revised the terms of their protectorate relationship; under the new agreement, Tonga was no longer required to receive British approval on financial decisions and civil cases brought by foreigners could be held in Tongan courts.⁹ In the same revision, Britain transferred control of Tonga's defense to New Zealand. The Tonga Defence Force was temporarily disbanded after World War II but was then reestablished in 1954 with support from Britain and New Zealand.¹⁰ New Zealand agreed to provide Tonga with strategic, monetary, and material support in exchange for influence over Tonga's military and reasonable compensation for the support provided to Tonga.¹¹ In 1970 Tonga ended its protectorate status with Britain and the TDF's name was changed to the Tonga Defence Services. Although Tonga became more and more legally independent as Britain and Tonga moved towards an independence agreement, Tāufa'āhau Tupou IV's "modernization" efforts caused Tonga to borrow even more heavily from Britain. Therefore by 1970, when independence was finally achieved, Tonga was already economically

⁸ Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett. "Dependent State Formation and Third World Militarization," *Review of International Studies* 19, no. 4 (1993): 321-347, 330.

⁹ Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 185.

¹⁰ Wood-Ellem, *Queen Sālote of Tonga*, 219.

¹¹ "Exchange of Notes: Constituting an Agreement Between the Government of New Zealand and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning Defence Arrangements for the Kingdom of Tonga," opened for signature June 24, 1954.

dependent on foreign investors. The primary benefactors to Tonga at the time were New Zealand and Britain and this remained so until the 1990s, when Australia surpassed them and became Tonga's primary donor.¹² Presently, Australia remains Tonga's greatest donor, but China is a very close second; however, Tonga has yet to participate in any Chinese military campaigns.

The weakness of Tonga's formal economy makes the nation vulnerable to being dependent on foreign aid. It is this dependency that facilitates economic imperialism or "informal empires." "Informal empires...are constituted by a fusion of power and social purpose in which the authority of dominant states penetrates the territorial space of subordinate states."¹³ By providing weaker states with weapons, donor states prevent their beneficiaries "from becoming militarily self-sufficient."¹⁴ In addition to weapons supplies, foreign training programs "explicitly intend to promote the political and military interests of the host."¹⁵ Through this process, Tonga has been incorporated into Pacific militarization despite the nation's perceived continuous independence from colonial powers.

Once again, I turn to Teresia Teaiwa's, "The Articulated Limb: Theorizing Indigenous Pacific Participation in the Military Industrial Complex." She positions militarized Pacific Island nations as the limbs of empire, she writes: "the ligaments, tendons, nerves and blood vessels that grow around an articulated limb make the possibility of disarticulation inevitably violent and traumatizing. I suggest that the MIC as an ensemble is held together not simply by mechanistic linkages but, at certain points in space and time, by tendential forces analogous to those surrounding an articulated limb."¹⁶ In the article she explores the motivations behind Fijian and Chamorro participation in U.S., British, and UN military and peacekeeping campaigns. She argues that in both instances notions of bravery, masculinity, and duty compel indigenous soldiers to support colonial powers.¹⁷ The emotional and identity driven aspects of indigenous enlistment are further perpetuated by the profitability of service. Teaiwa does not include Tonga in her analysis, but Fiji and Tonga are two out of only four indigenous independent militaries in

¹² Gareth Grainger, "Tonga and Australia Since World War II," in Scarr, *Echoes of Pacific War*, 69.

¹³ Wendt and Barnett, "Dependent State Formation," 339.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 335.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 339.

¹⁶ Teaiwa, "The Articulated Limb," 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

the Pacific, so there is considerable overlap between the two nation's defense policies. Therefore, her conclusions are compatible with the current state of Tonga's military. For example, Teaiwa argues that Fijians are incorporated into the MIC by serving as laborers for the British military; similarly, Tonga has provided the U.S., UK, and Australia with labor in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Solomon Islands. In return for their service, Tonga is compensated, which fosters a dependent and militarized relationship between Tonga, the U.S., UK, and Australia.

Serious efforts to incorporate Tonga into the global military industrial complex became evident in 1988 when Australia established a Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) in Tonga.¹⁸ The Australian DCP emerged after the UN established exclusive economic zones. The DCP was designed to assist Pacific nations who could not afford to monitor their newly established exclusive economic zones, or EEZs (200 nautical miles beyond their coastlines) by providing them with patrol boats, defense aid, and maritime training.¹⁹ By positioning the project as a philanthropic venture to support Pacific nation's security, Australia legitimized their increased military presence in the Pacific, and inherently increased their power in the region. The DCP is still active and growing; the Australian government describes the role of DCP as "maximise[ing] Australia's security through developing close and enduring links with partners that support their capacity to protect their sovereignty, work effectively with the Australian Defence Force and contribute to regional security."²⁰ The estimated budget for DCP funds to Tonga from 2017-18 was \$2,700,000AU, and is the third largest South Pacific recipient of DCP aid, behind Fiji and Timor Lest.²¹

Since the 1990's Australia has also funded the renovation of Taliai Military Camp, the Toulaki Naval Base, and the Vilai Barracks. Additionally, Australia continues to train Tongan soldiers at their military academies.²² Tonga also receives training and military financial support

¹⁸ Grainger, "Tonga and Australia," 69.

¹⁹ Jennifer Moroney, Celest Gventer, Stephanie Pezard, and Laurence Smallman, "Australia's Approach to Security Cooperation," in *Lessons from U.S. Allies in Security Cooperation with Third Countries*, (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2011), 16.

²⁰ Australian Parliament, Department of Defence, *2017-18 Defence Portfolio Budget Statements*, 114. http://www.defence.gov.au/Budget/17-18/2017-18_Defence_PBS_03_Appendices.pdf (April 8, 2018.)

²¹ *Ibid.*, 116.

²² "Rebuilding Tonga's Military Bases," Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability. Nautilus.org (Accessed April, 8 2018.)

from the U.S. and has collaborated with the Royal Air Force on multiple occasions. Fiji, PNG, Vanuatu, and Tonga are the only Pacific Island nations with independent militaries in the Pacific. Despite the existence of independent militaries, there is no production of firearms or military equipment in the Pacific; all of it is imported. As of 2003, the main suppliers of weapons to the Pacific were the U.S., Israel, South Korea and Singapore.²³ At the time the standard infantry weapon for Tongan soldiers was the Belgian 7.62 mm FN FNCE and .303 Mark IV rifles left over from WWII which had been given to Tonga by New Zealand. By 2003, Tonga was hoping to upgrade their equipment through the US Foreign Military Sales program.²⁴ Tonga's interest in upgrading their artillery coincided with their deepening involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Afghanistan

Tonga was not a participant in the coalition of nations who supported the U.S. during the Gulf War, which lasted from 1990-91. This is most likely because Tonga was only in the early stages of militarization funded by foreign aid. New Zealand, Australia, and Britain were all involved in the Gulf War as well as in the Iraq and Afghanistan war. This suggests that there was a clear change in Tongan foreign policy, and an increase in Pacific militarization by foreign powers from the time of the Gulf War to the beginning of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars in the 2000s.

Afghanistan has suffered successive invasions by foreign powers since the 1979 Soviet invasion in which the Soviets fought in favor the communist government, and against the U.S. backed Mujahedeen. After Soviet withdrawal in 1989, Afghanistan was in a state of perpetual civil unrest, which allowed the Taliban to gain considerable control. During the chronic chaos, the Afghan economy collapsed, and became dependent on exporting opium.²⁵ The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, or as President George W. Bush named it, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), was prompted by the September 11, 2001 attacks on the New York World Trade Center and the U.S. Pentagon. The attacks were attributed to al-Qaeda and its leader Osama bin Laden who was

²³ David H. Capie. *Under the Gun: The Small Arms Challenge in the Pacific*, (Wellington: Victoria University Press in Association with the Peace and Disarmament Education Trust, 2003), 11, 71.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁵ Anthony Tucker-Jones. *The Afghan War Operation Enduring Freedom 2001-2014* (Havertown: Pen and Sword, 2014), 30.

living in Taliban controlled Afghanistan. On September 20th, 2001, President George Bush met with British Prime Minister Tony Blair who offered Britain's full support to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan.²⁶ Within a month U.S. and British forces bombarded Afghanistan with devastating airstrikes and took control of Kabul, thus significantly weakening Taliban dominance in Afghanistan.²⁷ The goal of OEF was to dismantle the Taliban, capture Bin Laden, and establish a stable state government that would be favorable to the U.S. The U.S. strategy was to limit ground troops by utilizing air assaults and by partnering with the Northern Alliance who had been fighting the Taliban for over a decade by the time of the U.S. invasion.

After the 9/11 attacks there was global support for U.S. military campaigns into the Middle East, and a widespread panic over the threat of "terrorism." In late September 2001 the UN Security Council passed resolution 1368 and 1373 as well as General Assembly Resolution 56/1.²⁸ Resolution 1368 "Call[ed] also on the international community to redouble their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts including by increased cooperation and full implementation of the relevant international anti-terrorist conventions."²⁹ International support for the Afghan War continued through the early 2000s. NATO even took charge of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in 2003. ISAF soldiers were predominately U.S., British, German, Canadian, and Dutch soldiers.³⁰ Despite the massive flow of soldiers and equipment into the U.S. and NATO attacks on the Taliban, the organization seemed elusive, and utilized Pakistan as well as the Afghani mountains to shield themselves from destruction. Additionally, the devastating violence caused by U.S. and NATO forces inspired many Afghanis to join the Taliban in defense of their homeland.³¹ After a decade of fighting, exhaustion and frustration pervaded international opinion, but the war only seemed to be intensifying. Therefore, in 2010 when most international forces were ready to leave Afghanistan, Britain recruited Tongan soldiers to support them in defending the Joint Operating Base at Camp Bastion, the most critical base in southwest Afghanistan. Britain agreed to pay for the cost of deployment and to pay the

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁹ U.N. Security Council, 2001. "Resolution 1368 (2001) [Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts]," 12 September 2001. (S/RES/1368).

³⁰ Tucker-Jones, *The Afghan War*, 62.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

soldiers 30 pounds per day. Rotating contingents of 55 Tongan soldiers partnered with the Royal Air Force to preform security detail at the camp from 2010-2014.³²

In September of 2012 fifteen Taliban members dressed in U.S. Army uniforms, cut through the protective wire on the eastern border of the camp and began attacking the base's airfield. During the assault, two U.S. Marine Corps soldiers died and sixteen U.S. and British personnel were wounded.³³ The attackers were killed relatively quickly by a helicopter strike, but the attack still managed to cause \$200 million dollars' worth of damage. A U.S. accountability review in 2013 found that two U.S. generals were at fault for inadequate leadership and oversight; RAF personnel were also cited as not securing the base sufficiently enough, but they were not found culpable since the responsibility of the base's security was ultimately in the hands of the leading U.S. officers.³⁴ The watchtower closest to the breach, number 16, was unmanned during the attack, and towers 15 and 17 did not have clear views of the breach point.³⁵ Tower 16 was unmanned due to a management decision, not due to any personal mistake made by a guardsman. At the time it was common practice for towers to be unmanned.

Neither the UK nor U.S. investigations found Tongan Defence Services at fault, but a variety of news articles did not hesitate to place the blame on Tongan soldiers. A *Washington Post* article claimed that prior to the attack, “Marine officers also had been concerned about the performance of the Tongan troops, who were sometimes found asleep at their posts.”³⁶ This claim was perpetuated and included in a variety of publications but was never mentioned in the official investigations. Captain Toni Fonokalafi refuted the criticisms of Tongan troops; he explained that the “drop in the level of security in general enabled the Taliban to filter into the

³² “Final Tongan Contingent Recognised for Efforts in Afghanistan.” *Gov.uk*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/final-tongan-contingent-recognised-for-efforts-in-afghanistan>

³³ “Afghanistan Camp Bastion Attack,” *House of Commons Defence Committee*, 13th report of session 2013-14, 26 March 2014, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmdfence/830/830.pdf>, 5.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

³⁶ Rajiv Chandrasekaran, “Taliban Attack Exploited Security Cutbacks,” *The Washington Post*, April 20, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/taliban-attack-exploited-security-cutbacks/2013/04/20/b22a0c18-a796-11e2-8302-3c7e0ea97057_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.1b15ba2711e4.

camp.”³⁷ Additionally, Tongan soldiers were performing security duties along with RAF members, and could not be singled out as the group with the most culpability. During this incident, Tongan soldiers served as cheap alternatives to standard RAF guards, and a convenient target for media blame. Stereotypes of Pacific Islander men as fierce warriors and lazy natives worked together to mask the true failures behind the attack. In reality the assault was possible due to the high-level management decisions made by U.S. generals, not by Tongan soldiers.³⁸

In 2014, NATO withdrew from Afghanistan without having completely defeated the Taliban. It was also in 2014 that the last contingent of Tongan soldiers returned from duty. In May of 2014, over one hundred Tongan soldiers received Afghanistan Operational Service medals for their work at Camp Bastion. Tonga’s involvement in Afghanistan had lasting economic and political impacts. The U.S. State Partnership Program created a link between the Nevada National Guard and Tonga. The Tongan Military and the Nevada National Guard were paired together, because the U.S. government believed that the two shared common issues such as population isolation due to Nevada’s mountains and deserts and Tonga’s many dispersed islands and two places’ limited economies. The partnership arranged for the two militaries to have between 4 and 6 exchanges a year so that the militaries could provide pertinent information to one another and participate in training exercises.³⁹ The general of the Nevada National Guard at the time of the signing, General Burks, said of the partnership: “As one of the anchor tenants in the Oceania region, Tonga can inform us on matters of military significance as we shift our emphasis to the Pacific theater...This partnership will create a shared sense of responsibility as we work together on security issues, humanitarian assistance and domestic response goals.”⁴⁰ Burk’s statement acknowledges the U.S.’s intentions to continue militarizing the Pacific. As described earlier, the logic of militarization is rooted in the notion that wars are fought from an

³⁷ “Tonga Rejects Criticism of Its Troops in Afghanistan War,” *Radio New Zealand*, October 8, 2013, <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/224040/tonga-rejects-criticism-of-its-troops-in-afghan-war>

³⁸ “Afghanistan Camp Bastion Attack,” *House of Commons Defence Committee*, Thirteenth Report of Session 2013-14.

³⁹ Dennis Fournier, “Nevada National Guard Joins Forces with Tonga in State Partnership Program,” *National Guard*, 16 April, 2014, <http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article-View/Article/575627/nevada-national-guard-joins-forces-with-tonga-in-state-partnership-program/>

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

ideological vantage point and that the solution to security dilemmas is hegemony or at least control of “vital systems.”⁴¹ By investing in Pacific militaries, the U.S. is attempting to broaden and strengthen its influence in the Pacific and globally. In addition to the partnership, the U.S. also continues to provide Tonga with Foreign Military Financing funds and International Military Education and Training programs.⁴²

In an interview with the Pasifika Director at Massey University, Malakai Koloamatangi, Don Wiseman of *Radio New Zealand* questioned Koloamatangi on Tonga’s motives for deployment to Afghanistan:

Malakai I Kololamatangi: Yes, of course, there were several objectives that directed employment in the first place, and perhaps beginning in the two world wars Tonga has always tried to play its part. Not only in regional affairs but also, of course, internationally.

Don Wisemen: This was more about the government making some money though wasn't it?

MK: That's right, yes. But in the guise of being a good international citizen, but Tonga has tried to do that and of course it's gotten revenue in the process and training for the military, and of course the question becomes: what do you do with a standing army that has seen action overseas and that is used to being in warring areas? So, what do you do with a large standing army in peace time?⁴³

By Koloamatangi’s first answer, it is apparent that Tongan soldiers’ military service in Afghanistan is connected to Tongan participation in WWI and WWII. Koloamatangi goes on to predict that the Tongan military will only increase in size and continue to receive aid for participating in foreign campaigns despite the current and continuing peace in Tonga. So far, Koloamatangi’s predictions and analyses have held true.

⁴¹ Davis, *Empires’ Edge*, 14.

⁴² “U.S. Relations with Tonga: Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs Fact Sheet,” U.S Department of State: Diplomacy in Action, December 22, 2016, <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/16092.htm>.

⁴³ Don Wiseman, “Tonga’s Afghanistan Deployment Completed -What’s Next?” *Radio New Zealand*, May 12, 2014, <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/programmes/datelinepacific/audio/2595385/tonga-s-afghanistan-deployment-completed-what-s-next>.

Iraq

Tonga also participated in the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Unlike the Afghan War, which was prompted by direct assaults on the U.S., the Iraq War was fueled by the global panic against “terrorism” following the 9/11 attacks and the erroneous belief that Iraq possessed and manufactured “weapons of mass destruction.” Despite the panic, unlike in the Afghan War, the U.S. did not receive UN approval and support for the invasion of Iraq. In light of the UN’s disapproval of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the U.S. compiled what it termed a “coalition of the willing.”⁴⁴ The U.S. was able to garner international support based on the claim that Iraq was in possession of “weapons of mass destruction.” This conclusion was made despite the fact that the U.S. intelligence agencies had no physical evidence or reliable human intelligence sources that could prove the existence of chemical or nuclear weapons in Iraq.⁴⁵ By 2004, only a year after the war began, numerous sources regarding the existence of biochemical weapons were found to have been fabricated, and no “weapons of mass destruction” were ever uncovered.⁴⁶ Beyond the concern that Iraq might possess “weapons of mass destruction,” the U.S. also argued that the Saddam Hussein regime could support and supply “terrorist” networks thus posing a “security dilemma.”⁴⁷ The U.S. characterized the Iraq War as a justifiable “pre-emptive strike.”

Furthermore, 9/11 created a “policy window” due to the pervasive panic; policies that the U.S. government had wanted to pass for a longtime could now be sanctioned by Congress and implemented.⁴⁸ Suddenly, toppling the reign of Saddam Hussein regime became a political possibility. Dismantling the regime had been considered since the Gulf War, and now that the political climate would allow military intervention, the U.S. government saw it as an opportunity to create more democracy in the Middle East. The U.S. hoped that more democracy would lead to more stability and less “terrorist” activity, and more broadly they saw it as an opportunity to

⁴⁴ Stephen A. Carney and Center of Military History, *Allied Participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom*, CMH Pub; 59-3-1, (Washington, D.C.: United States Army, Center of Military History, 2011,) 1.

⁴⁵ Richard K Betts, “Two Faces of Intelligence Failure: September 11 and Iraq’s Missing WMD,” *Political Science Quarterly* 122, no. 4 (2007/2008): 585-606, 601.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 602.

⁴⁷ Jan Hallenberg, Heidi Karlsson, Håkan Karlsson, and Yannis Papadopoulos, *The Iraq War*, (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2005), 8.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

create governments that were favorable to U.S. interests.⁴⁹ At least one of the primary motives behind the invasion of Iraq was to begin a state-building project designed to create a Middle East more amenable to U.S. desires. By compiling an international force through the “coalition of the willing” the U.S. also attempted to assuage accusations of colonialism and imperialism.⁵⁰ However the state building goals of both the Iraq War and the Afghan War are unmistakable and cannot be separated from analyses of U.S. imperialism.

On the 20th of March 2003 “Operation Iraqi Freedom” commenced; although the U.S. government claims between 20 and 50 countries formally supported U.S. actions, in reality only the U.S., UK, Australia, and Poland sent ground troops in the first attack, and Spain and Italy joined later. By May, President Bush decided to declare the end of “major combat missions” and commenced the implementation of Phase IV of OIF, which was focused on state building.⁵¹ By October, the UN passed Security Council Resolution 1511 which legitimized creating and supporting a multinational security force in Iraq. This passage inspired broader international support and participation for the U.S. war effort.⁵² U.S. and international forces were able to overthrow Saddam Hussein’s government relatively swiftly, but U.S. strategy for the reconstruction of Iraq was ill conceived and misguided, as imperial projects tend to be. The chaos that ensued, following the destruction of Saddam and the Ba’ath Party’s regime, fomented anti-American sentiment within Iraq and served to strengthen terrorist organizations. Therefore, from 2004-2011, the U.S. and the gradually waning Coalition Forces fought against ever-emergent post-Saddam insurgencies.

Tonga was an original member of the Coalition of the Willing, and in 2004 Tonga sent its first contingent to Iraq to support the US I Marine Expeditionary Force in Al Anbar Province as security at Camp Blue Diamond.⁵³ This was Tonga’s first deployment as an independent country with an independent military outside of the Pacific. Interestingly, Tonga sent troops to Iraq before Afghanistan, even though the war in Afghanistan began earlier and had UN support. The *New Zealand Herald* quoted then Prime Minister Prince ‘Ulukalala Lavaka Ata saying “We remember when the United States came to defend Tonga and the region during the Second

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵⁰ Carney, *Allied Participation*, 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 115.

World War...but Tonga's contribution to the effort to bring peace and stability to Iraq is only relative to what we can afford."⁵⁴ Interestingly enough, despite Tonga's small size and limited resources, the kingdom sent only fifty soldiers fewer than New Zealand, and stayed longer.⁵⁵ Although Lavaka did not mention profit in his reasoning for Tonga's participation in Iraq, government officials did cite jobs as a reason for deploying to Afghanistan. The British invested 2.6million pounds in the deployment of Tongans to Afghanistan, which included stipends, uniforms, and equipment.⁵⁶ Therefore, one can infer that there was a financial component to Tonga's decision to join the Coalition Forces in Iraq.

Tonga's second deployment to Iraq was in 2008, which sent 55 Tongan Royal Marines to provide security for the Coalition Forces at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad.⁵⁷ Unlike Camp Bastion, Tongans performed their security duties without incident, and received praise from the U.S. and the international community for their commitment to supporting the U.S. despite Tonga's small size and limited resources. By 2009, all Tongan troops had left Iraq, and shortly afterwards Tonga began their participation in the Afghan War. The U.S. never fulfilled its goal of gaining complete control in Iraq and establishing a fully functioning democratic government. The last combat operation ended in 2010, Operation Iraqi Freedom was officially ended in 2011, and now only a few U.S. forces remain in Iraq and operate a training mission.⁵⁸

As aforementioned, the goals of the Iraq and Afghan War had state building at their cores. This is why the missions failed and why the wars lasted so long, because as quoted from A.J. Coates earlier, "It is precisely the 'altruistic' pursuit of warfare that generates militarism and leads to the systematic undermining of every limit placed upon war."⁵⁹ The ideology behind the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars went far beyond any practical goals and sought to establish completely new governments. As a state-building and essentially imperial project, there was no definitive end point, and so more and more resources were poured into the cause. This is how

⁵⁴"Tonga Sends 44 Troops to Help U.S. in Iraq," *New Zealand Herald*, June 16, 2004, https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=3572680.

⁵⁵ Carney, *Allied Participation*, 39.

⁵⁶ "Tonga Sends Troops to Afghanistan to Create Jobs," *The Australian*, July 28, 2010, <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/tonga-sends-troops-to-afghanistan-to-create-jobs/news-story>.

⁵⁷ Carney, *Allied Participation*, 115.

⁵⁸ Tucker-Jones, *The Iraq War*, 127.

⁵⁹ Coates, *Ethics of War*, 42.

militarism breeds militarization, and how Tonga is becoming increasingly enmeshed in the global military industrial complex.

While the TDS assisted the U.S. in its state building goals, Tonga's engagements in these military campaigns also served to foster foreign state building in Tonga. The U.S., Australia, and the UK's ardent support of the Tongan military in training and arming soldiers reflect the arguments of Wendt and Barnett. By funding Tonga's military, the U.S., UK, and Australia have significant influence on Tonga's foreign policy, and have informally limited the extent to which Tonga is militarily independent. Radio New Zealand reported that in 2006 alone, as a response to Tongan support of the U.S. military effort, the U.S. gave Tonga at least one million dollars' worth of weapons and equipment.

Dependent states are more responsive to donor state interests than their own citizenry. Public opinion in Tonga concerning their involvement in the Middle East was lukewarm at best, and some were even openly opposed to the decision. Now Prime Minister, Akilisi Pohiva, was quoted as saying "Tonga doesn't want any foreign country or foreign power to interfere in our local, you know, domestic affairs. So the question is why should Tonga interfere in the Iraqi affairs?"⁶⁰ Since the public seemed to have mixed feelings about Tonga's involvement, there is reason to believe that the decision to join was made by government elites interested in pleasing donor states rather than being prompted by public support. Pohiva leads the Tongan Democracy Movement, a political faction that wants to democratize Tonga. The Democracy Movement's disapproval of Tonga's participation adds another layer of irony to Tonga's engagement in OIF and OEF since Tonga was fighting to spread democracy when Tonga itself is a monarchy.

Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands

At the same time that Tonga Defense Services joined the U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq, Tongan soldiers also joined the Australian backed Regional Assistance Mission to the

⁶⁰ "Tongans Voice Opposition to Military Deployment to Iraq," *Radio New Zealand*. 18 June, 2004, <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/149186/Tongans-voice-opposition-to-military-deployment-to-iraq>.

Solomon Islands (RAMSI) in July of 2003.⁶¹ Tarcisius Kabutaulaka draws parallels between the Afghan War and RAMSI in his article, “Australian Foreign Policy and the RAMSI Intervention in the Solomon Islands.” Kabutaulaka suggests that: “The goal, in both Afghanistan and Solomon Islands, was to turn these countries not into Jeffersonian democracies, but into at least quasi-functioning states where roads, bridges, and water supplies would be restored, violent conflicts and law-and-order problems ended, and an institutional climate established to ensure that terrorists did not use failed states venue for launching attacks on western countries.”⁶² This goal was adopted by Australia in the post 9/11 fervor about the dangers of “failed states” as fertile ground for terrorist organizations.

Although the Solomon Islands gained independence in 1978, the legacies of British colonialism continued; development was concentrated on Guadalcanal despite higher populations on other islands and preferential treatment was given to massive multinational corporations who in turn caused land alienation. The nascent government quickly accumulated debt while simultaneously providing tax breaks for predatory corporations. In addition to the country’s financial woes, there was rampant government corruption. Furthermore, the concentration of development in Honiara attracted many internal migrants, which was then compounded by Bougainville immigrants. The government’s refusal to respond to Guadalcanal residents’ concerns over migration and the increasing economic inequities throughout the country resulted in the Guadalcanal Crisis.⁶³

In the mid 1990s, frustration was already brewing among a group of Guadalcanal men over the increased settlement of outside islanders in Honiara, particularly Malaitans, and the government’s inactions concerning the country’s stagnating economy. In 1998 the group began attacking Malaitan settlements and demanding compensation for the usage of Honiara as the capital. The Guadalcanal combatants named themselves the Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM);

⁶¹ “Solomon Islands: 2003-2013,” NZ Army Ngati Tumatauenga, March 18, 2015, <http://www.army.mil.nz/about-us/what-we-do/deployments/previous-deployments/solomon+islands/default.htm>.

⁶² Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, “Australian Foreign Policy and the Ramsi Intervention in the Solomon Islands,” *Contemporary Pacific* 17, no. 2 (2005): 283-308, 301.

⁶³ Tarcisius Kabutaulaka, “Beyond Ethnicity: The Political Economy of the Guadalcanal Crisis in Solomon Islands,” *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Working Paper* 01/1, Canberra: ANU Department of Pacific Affairs, 2001. <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/41949/1/tarcisiusworkingpaper.htm>

tensions continued to rise and in response, Malaitans united to create the Malaitan Eagle Force (MEF). In 2000, the MEF and members of the Royal Solomon Islands Police ousted Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu.⁶⁴ Most reports have emphasized the role of ethnicity in the Guadalcanal Crisis, but Kabutaulaka argues that simple ethnic divisions between people from Guadalcanal and Malaita do not exist and that both islands are home to a diverse array of language and ethnic groups; instead it was socio-economic disparities and political disagreements, which led to the violence. The Solomon government requested Australian and New Zealand assistance multiple times, but it was not until 2003 that international forces involved themselves.⁶⁵ Australia had initially rejected the requests due to fears that their participation would inspire criticisms and accusations of imperialism throughout the Pacific, and because there was no public support in Australia to justify such action. However, after the 9/11 attacks and Australia's support of the Afghan and Iraq Wars, the nation finally agreed to intervene in the worsening violence in the Solomons, but only through partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum.

The Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) is a multinational organization that was founded in 1971 and consists of 18-member states including Tonga. In October of 2001, PIF members signed the Biketawa Declaration, which affirmed their commitments to regional peace and security and "recognized the need in time of crisis or in response to member's request for assistance for action to be taken on the basis of all members of the Forum being part of the Pacific Islands extended family."⁶⁶ This declaration created the legal framework for Australia to organize RAMSI.

On July 24th 2003, Australia, the Solomon Islands, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, and Tonga signed an agreement "concerning the operations and status of the police and armed forces and other personnel deployed to Solomon Islands to assist in the restoration of law and order and security." The agreement decided a police peace-keeping mission was necessary "to restore law and order, supported as required by armed peace-keepers,

⁶⁴ Kabutaulaka, "Beyond Ethnicity," 2001.

⁶⁵ Kabutaulaka, "Australian Foreign Policy", 286.

⁶⁶ "Biketawa' Declaration," opened for signature October, 2000, *31st Summit of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders*, Kiribati. <https://www.ramsi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Biketawa-Declaration.pdf>.

and a program of assistance to strengthen the justice system and restore the economy and basic services... [and] to assist the effective functioning of government, the restoration of confidence in law and order, and the economic recovery of Solomon Islands.”⁶⁷ The agreement allowed for visiting contingents to exercise a great deal of power. They had the right to seize and destroy weapons they believed to be possessed illegally or with the intention to cause violence; they were not subject to Solomon Islands courts but remained under the jurisdiction of their own countries; and the leader of both the Participating Armed Forces and Participating Police Force [PPF] was always the most senior Australian member.

The excessive power allotted to the PPF inevitably resulted in conflict. In 2007 Tongan soldiers were accused of badly beating Malaitan youths after the two groups had a dispute over a break-in at a gas station.⁶⁸ Additionally, in 2010 two Tongan police officers were accused of killing a Solomon Islander man, after being called to calm a bar fight. The Royal Solomon Islands Police Force attempted to conduct a full investigation of the incident, but they were unable to interview the two officers. Prime Minister Feleti Sevele stated that there was no need for an investigation since the soldiers “were only acting under the rules of engagement.”⁶⁹ Tongans were not only participants to RAMSI, but they were complicit in undermining Solomon authority.

The three pronged approach of RAMSI consisted of “commencement,” i.e., quelling violence, disarming the public, and enforcing law and order. “Consolidation” which focused on governmental reform was the second approach. The third, “sustainability and self-reliance” addressed economic and social reform.⁷⁰ The first goal of RAMSI was to disarm militias and the

⁶⁷ “Agreement Between Solomon Islands, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Tonga Concerning the Operations and Status of the Police and Armed Forces and Other Personnel Deployed to Solomon Islands to Assist in the Restoration of Law and Order and Security,” opened for signature 24 July, 2003, *Treaty Series: Australian Treaty Series (2003) ATS 17*, www.aphref.aph.gov.au_house_committee_jsct_september2003_treaties_sitext.pdf.

⁶⁸ “Tongan Soldiers in Alleged Brawl with Drunk Solomon Islands Youths,” *Radio New Zealand*, November 1, 2017, <https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/173665/tongan-soldiers-in-alleged-brawl-with-drunk-solomon-islands-youths>.

⁶⁹ “Tonga’s PM Comments on Soldiers,” *Solomon Times Online*, September 2, 2010, <http://www.solomontimes.com/news/tongas-pm-comments-on-soldiers/5509>.

⁷⁰ Glenn Russell, *Counterinsurgency in a Test Tube: Analyzing the Success of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI)*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2007), 23.

public; therefore, the Participating Police Force strictly implemented anti-gun regulations. Individuals could face prison time or massive fines if found to possess a weapon.⁷¹ RAMSI instituted a gun amnesty program whereby civilians had to turn-in their firearms to RAMSI officials who would destroy the weapons in front of them; more than 3,700 were confiscated in this manner.⁷² The next step in the “commencement” phase was the surrender of militia leaders including the leader of the Guadalcanal Liberation Front, Harold Keke. The final stage of RAMSI, supporting state institutions and the economy, would take until 2017, and it is debatable whether or not RAMSI truly met these goals.

The greatest challenge RAMSI faced was in supporting the RSIPF (Royal Solomon Islands Police Force.) The RSIPF was predominately made of Malaitans, which proved problematic during the Crisis since they were not able to act without bias, and even helped the MEF oust PM Ulufa’alu.⁷³ Between 2003-2013 there was a 62% turnover in the RSIPF, resulting in a loss of leadership. Public opinion of the RSIPF has also been damaged. The PPF working as a parallel institution with seemingly more power resulted in the widespread “perception that the RSIPF was less efficient, less competent and less trustworthy than the PPF officers.”⁷⁴ Reforming the RSIPF remained the central focus of RAMSI until its conclusion in July of 2017. The long-term impacts remain to be seen, but most agree that RAMSI effectively mitigated the violence and tensions that were escalating in 2003. However, RAMSI has not escaped critiques of creating dependency on Australia and failing to address the socio-economic issues that created the tensions in the first place. Australia’s approach to stabilizing the Solomons is aligned with the assertions of Max Weber, that the state legitimizes itself by having sole control of violence. Therefore, RAMSI’s primary goal was to reform and fortify the RSIPF rather than to address the social needs of disgruntled and frustrated Solomon Islanders. In turn for its participation, Tonga received military support and training, plus the salaries received by soldiers contributed to Tonga’s remittance economy. By monetarily supporting Tonga’s defense programs, Australia is

⁷¹ Stephanie Koorey, "Australia and Solomon Islands: What next after 14 Years of Regional Assistance?" *Australian Defence Force Journal*, no. 198 (2015): 49-57, 52.

⁷² Russell, *Counterinsurgency in a Test Tube*, 25.

⁷³ Jon Fraenkel, Joni Madraiwiwi, Henry Okole, “The RAMSI Decade: A Review of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, 2003--2013,” *East West Center*, 14 July 2014, 35. <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/filemanager/pidp/pdf/Independent%20RAMSI%20Review%20Report%20Final.pdf>

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

fortifying the strength of the Tongan state in a way that conforms to Weberian notions of legitimizing power via enforcing the state's sole control of violence. This militarized relationship between Tonga and Australia causes Tonga to be increasingly, monetarily, politically, and militarily dependent on Australia and ultimately makes Tonga more amenable to Australian power in the Pacific.

Although the Solomon Islands' government did request help from Australia, the state building aspect of RAMSI's goals is concerning. Kabutaulaka says, "the "failed state" discourse, and the parallel negative representation of the region, are not simply descriptions of actual situations—not neutral representations of realities—but are in addition a crucial justification for outside intervention and for Canberra's leadership."⁷⁵ By representing the Solomon Islands as a "failed state" in desperate need of Australian rehabilitation, Australia not only served to justify its involvement, but encouraged state building policies that fostered dependence on Australia, giving the country even more influence in the Solomons than before they intervened. Under RAMSI, Australians assumed positions of power throughout the Solomon government especially in the financial sector, thereby giving Australia significant political power over the direction of the Solomons' economy. Although RAMSI was a collaborative effort, only Australia gained political influence in the Solomons, not Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, or any of the other PIF states that participated. If anything, the collaborative effort instead strengthened Australia's influence in participating states, rather than participating states gaining more influence in the region.

Furthermore, RAMSI was initially expected to last a few months, but instead lasted from 2003-2017 and cost Australia around \$2.6billion.⁷⁶ The extended length of RAMSI and the sheer amount of money Australia willingly contributed to the project demonstrates the commitment Australia has to increasing its influence throughout the region. Tonga does not seem to be wary of this, but rather very supportive, by offering military services to a variety of Australian projects. As China continues to become a major donor to Tonga, it's interesting to consider how this might impact Tonga's relationship with Australia. So far Tonga has not served in any Chinese military campaigns, but it is reasonable to believe that this might change in the near future.

⁷⁵ Kabutaulaka, "Australian Foreign Policy," 297.

⁷⁶ Koorey, "Australia and Solomon Islands," 51.

2006 Democracy

As Tonga deployed soldiers to enforce law and order and to spread democracy, the kingdom itself was facing a growing movement demanding democratic change. The death of Tupou IV in September 2006 was followed by violent riots in Nuku'alofa. He reigned during the transition years of Tonga as a British protectorate to becoming a fully independent state, and part of his strategy was to develop Tonga's economy as quickly as possible without democratizing. Prior to 2006, Parliament consisted of 9 elected representatives and 9 nobles elected by the nobles; legislation was generated from the King and the Privy Council, of which the King selected the members. In order for legislation to pass, it had to have majority approval of the Parliament, unanimous approval of the cabinet and the king's consent.⁷⁷ King Tupou IV's refusal to implement constitutional reform during his reign guaranteed that his death would bring demands of radical change.⁷⁸

A desire for political reform had been growing in Tonga since the 1990s, and with the King's ailing health, the public held more and more demonstrations calling for better representation in the government. Due to the growing hostility of the public towards the Tongan government, in early 2006 Prime Minister Prince Lavaka stepped down and Dr. Feleti Sevele, the first commoner to hold the office, took his place.⁷⁹ Although his standing as a commoner made the public hopeful, Sevele was a known close associate of the crown prince, and he was appointed by the king and not elected. Sevele began reforms quickly, beginning with plans to nationalize electricity and reorganizing the cabinet, but the changes did not satisfy the public since Sevele did not transfer power away from the executive branch. In response to the intensifying protests, the government finally put forth a proposal to adopt a Westminster style of governance in October of 2006; however, the Parliament decided that changes to the proposal would not be renegotiated nor taken into effect until 2007.⁸⁰

The proposal was seen as too little too late. While heated debates raged inside Parliament, protesters in support of reform continued to gather outside of the Parliament building. On

⁷⁷Ian Campbell, "The Nettle Grasped," *The Journal of Pacific History* 47, no. 2 (2012): 211-25, 211.

⁷⁸ Ian Campbell, "Across the Threshold: Regime Change and Uncertainty in Tonga 2005-2007," *The Journal of Pacific History* 43, no. 1 (2008): 95-109, 96.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 212.

November 16th 2006, the Assembly demanded that the protesters disburse before they would vote on the constitutional changes. This incited fury among the demonstrators, and the riot began.⁸¹ After supporting Australia in the Solomons and the U.S. in Iraq and Afghanistan, it seemed as though Tonga was teetering on the verge of becoming a “failed state” itself. Those who participated in the destruction and violence focused on businesses owned by members of the royal family, Parliament, and Chinese residents. Ultimately Nuku’alofa was badly damaged by looters and arsonists, and eight individuals died in the chaos.⁸² Following the riots, Tonga declared a state of emergency and enacted the Emergency Powers Regulation, which allowed the Tonga Police and Tongan Defence Services to use force if necessary against persons suspected of causing violence and allowed them to search any person or vehicle without warrant; this lasted until February 2011.⁸³ Additionally, contingents from New Zealand and Australia were called in to control the riots.⁸⁴

By December, 400 people were charged in relationship to the destruction caused during the riots. Two reports accused the Tongan Defence Services of torture and maltreatment of detainees. One report was made by the National Centre for Women and Children and one by the Community Para-legal Taskforce on Human Rights. In response, the Tongan government argued that the report made by the National Centre for Women and Children was not credible and expressed skepticism concerning the report by the Para-legal Taskforce on Human Rights. The report made by the Para-legal Taskforce alleged that 41% of individuals who were arrested for participating in the riots experienced physical abuse, especially facial injuries and tooth loss.⁸⁵ The government offered two press releases in which they denied allegations of torture and abuse; still, the government insisted that their actions were legal and that “the Tonga Defence Services will use force as necessary (including force causing death) as stated in the TDS Act 1992 to

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁸² “State of Emergency after Tongan Riots,” *The Guardian*, November 17, 2006, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/nov/17/1>.

⁸³ “Tongan Post-Riot Emergency Powers Lifted After 50 Months,” *Matangi Tonga*, February 17, 2011.

⁸⁴ “Tongan Riots,” *New Zealand Defence Force*, <http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/operations/overseas-deployments/tonga/default.htm>.

⁸⁵ “Allegations of Torture and Mistreatment,” *Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability*. Nautilus.org. <https://nautilus.org/publications/books/australian-forces-abroad/tonga/allegations-of-torture-and-mistreatment/> (Accessed April 5, 2018)

restore and maintain Law and Order in the Kingdom.”⁸⁶ Fortunately, no deaths caused by the TDS were reported, but no officials were penalized for the alleged abuse either.

Finally, in 2010 the Tongan government fully implemented the changes laid out in 2006. Now there are 17 elected Public Representatives, 9 Noble Representatives (elected by nobles,) and the Prime Minister appoints cabinet members.⁸⁷ The king is still head of state, retains veto power, and is commander and chief. While the riots did not serve to bolster the democratic political agenda, the role of the TDS in quelling the riots raises the question of who the Tongan military serves, and who the “enemy” is. This question was further agitated when in 2013, parliament renamed the Tongan Defence Services to His Majesty’s Armed Forces. Although the name change received a majority vote in parliament, many of the PRs expressed concern that the name change connoted that the Tongan military’s allegiance is to the king rather than to the Tongan public.⁸⁸ While these concerns were dismissed by the majority of Parliament, the question as to who the Tongan military is designed to serve is valid. Given the military’s reputation of fighting for foreign agendas and using force against the Tongan public, it stands to reason that His Majesty’s Armed Forces’ primary goal is to serve the interests of the Tongan political elite and donor states.

China

Part of the reason that Chinese aid is becoming dominant in Tonga, and elsewhere in the world, is that China does not require beneficiary countries to comply with Chinese standards of governance; whereas aid from the U.S., UK, and Australia are conditional and usually requires that a country adhere to a set of requirements, such as having a democratic government in order to receive funds.⁸⁹ After the 2006 riots, the US and Australia refused to donate considerably to rebuilding the capital on the grounds that Tonga was not democratic enough. China on the other hand, contributed \$49 million in soft loans and a \$10 million-dollar grant in order to rebuild

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Campbell, "The Nettle Grasped," 219.

⁸⁸ Pesi Fonua, “Tonga Defence Services Renamed ‘His Majesty’s Armed Forces,’” *Pacific Islands Report*, 16 September, 2013, <http://www.pireport.org/articles/2013/09/16/tonga-defence-services-renamed-%E2%80%99his-majesty%E2%80%99s-armed-forces%E2%80%99>.

⁸⁹ Palentina Langa’oi, “China’s Diplomatic Relations with the Kingdom of Tonga,” in *China in Oceania: Reshaping the Pacific*, eds. Terence Wesley-Smith and Edgar A. Porter (New York, 2010), 168.

Nuku'alofa. This fact is one that Tongans have held on to since, and are generally glad that China contributed so generously, even though the Chinese community was targeted during the riots.⁹⁰

Dependency on foreign aid poses three primary issues. Aid and loans to Tonga's government directly benefits the ruling elite who do not always make decisions that benefit the majority of the population.⁹¹ Secondly, it makes Tonga more amenable to foreign desires and more susceptible to foreign interference. Lastly, a major concern in terms of China's monetary support is that their funds are given as soft loans and not outright aid. Therefore, China has the right to demand repayment on the loans, and in Tonga's case, it is unlikely that the country would be able to repay their staggering debts to China. A common concern that I frequently hear among Tongans is that China could ask for land as payment for debts. This is especially troubling for Tongans, since under the current system the sale of land is illegal, and no foreigner can own land. This principle has been central to the Tongan state since its inception under Tāufa'āhau.

Australia is still the largest donor to the Pacific, but in Tonga, China is a very close second. The Lowy Institute estimates that between 2006-2012 China has given \$130.49 million USD to Tonga and Australia has given \$157.74 million USD.⁹² Australia's anxiety over China's growing influence in the Pacific is no secret. In 2017 Australia released its "Foreign Policy White Paper," a ten-year projection for the country's foreign policy goals. In the introduction, Australia acknowledges China: "In the Indo-Pacific, the economic growth that has come with globalisation is in turn changing power balances. The United States has been the dominant power in our region throughout Australia's post-Second World War history. Today, China is challenging America's position."⁹³ The white paper's concerns echo much of Davis' analyses which argue that China is both the U.S.'s largest trading partner and the U.S.'s main competitor in global hegemony. He suggests that U.S. military posturing in the Pacific is an effort to protect

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁹² Philippa Brant, "Chinese Aid in the Pacific, Lowy Institute for International Policy: Tonga Snapshot," February 2015, <https://chineseaidmap.lowyinstitute.org/>. (Accessed September 7, 2018).

⁹³ Australian Government, "2017 Foreign Policy White Paper," <https://www.fpwhitepaper.gov.au/foreign-policy-white-paper/overview>.

“vital systems” of capitalist trade and protection rather than a means of “defending territory and perpetuating the state against opposition.”⁹⁴ Having a strong military presence in the region allows the U.S. to dictate trade as well as defend “the system” from all threats, environmental, military, and political.”⁹⁵ The further Tonga becomes incorporated into the U.S. and Australian militaries, the more complicated Tonga’s relationship with China becomes.

Conclusion

As previously discussed, Tonga’s involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan was not due to widespread public support, but rather a desire to create jobs, and to appease donor states. The same might be said about RAMSI; Tonga did profit from participating in the mission and has continued providing labor to peacekeeping and humanitarian missions led by Australia since. Lastly, the Tongan military’s role in stopping the 2006 Riots generated great criticism from the public, and inspired fear among citizens about the willingness of Tongan soldiers to use force against Tongan citizens. All of these engagements suggest that Tonga is being more deeply incorporated into the global MIC, and that Tonga is in fact part of the militarized Pacific even though it has never been formally colonized. By acknowledging and understanding how Tonga has become part of the global MIC, it becomes possible to draw stronger lines of solidarity with other island soldiers who experience the harsh reality of warfare for the benefit of wealthier nations. David Lipset eloquently summarizes the relationship between the U.S. and the Federated States of Micronesia in his review of the film *Island Soldier* (2017): “it is an abusive relationship, where the stakes are always high and there is only one victor.”⁹⁶ *Island Soldier* by Nathan Fitch is a documentary on Kosraen soldiers who fight in the U.S. military; it explores the soldiers’ motivations for joining, and the consequences the soldiers and their families experience due to their service.⁹⁷ Tonga and Tongans are not alone in their experience and participation in

⁹⁴ Davis, *Empires’ Edge*, 14.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁹⁶ David Lipset, “Review of *Island Soldier*,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 31, no. 1, (2019): 248-261, 249.

⁹⁷ Nathan Fitch, Bryan Chang, and Fivel Rothberg, *Island Soldier*, documentary film, Passion River Films, 2017.

Pacific militarization, but rather Tonga is a part of an ever-growing network of indigenous soldiers fighting imperial battles for settler states.⁹⁸

The military provides Tongans with opportunities to make decent wages and to move-up socioeconomically in a country where economic mobility is greatly limited, but if Tonga becomes reliant on defense aid from foreign nations, this poses a threat to Tongan sovereignty. From the theoretical perspective, the definition of sovereignty is having complete control of both international and domestic affairs. However, if Tonga is beholden to donor states, especially militarily, this infringes upon Tonga's ability to make foreign policy decisions based on what is best for its citizens rather than what will be profitable. Furthermore, if for some reason Tonga's donor states were to become hostile towards one another, this could potentially leave the kingdom in a compromising position. For example, if Australia and China were to become openly hostile, Tonga would be caught in the middle. This would pose a serious security threat to the kingdom, since either country could view Tonga as a potential threat due to the amount of aid each country has contributed to Tonga.

In Teaiwa's conclusion of "The Articulated Limb" (2017), she asks "Is disarticulation from the MIC possible?"⁹⁹ Her answer is inconclusive, but hopeful; she points to growing political movements led by women in the Pacific that are calling for an end to war and violence. One of the most difficult aspects of the MIC is that it is fueled economically; making a living is literally a matter of life and death for those who join the military. For Tonga to divest from its military and refuse to participate in foreign military campaigns would mean forfeiting millions of dollars in aid money and the loss of jobs in an already struggling economy. However, refraining from foreign military engagements would better preserve Tonga's sovereignty and could possibly limit the extent to which the state relies on military power to assert its legitimacy. Ideally, the Tongan military would divest from foreign military campaigns and refuse militarized aid. However, if Tonga continues to grow its military, and continues to provide labor to foreign militaries, then it should focus on engagements that are relevant to the security of the Pacific and that have been approved by the Pacific Islands Forum. These would be preferable to campaigns that have little to no regional significance and lack PIF or UN approval. Confining Tonga's involvement to issues that are immediately relevant to the Pacific creates a limit to how much

⁹⁸ Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," 388.

⁹⁹ Teaiwa, "The Articulated Limb," 114.

Tonga will militarize. If Tonga remains open to any conflict that their donor states are a part of, the potential for the militarization is limitless and could eventually jeopardize Tonga's sovereignty and the safety of its citizens.

Conclusion

With Our Backs to the Future

I remember the first time I saw Tongatapu. As the plane neared, I was in awe of the small rectangle of concrete in a sea of tropical trees. My angsty and doubtful adolescent mind thought, “there is no way we’ll ever make it,” and yet we did and do every time. When you step off the plane, the air is heavy with humidity and the smell of sweet flowers from the rows of families with gifts for their returning kin. Earlier in my thesis, I asked if the geographies of militarization could ever be remapped into generative spaces and alliances.¹ Now when I fly into Fu’amotu Airport, the original site of the WWII airbase, I think of this airport is an example of reclaiming geographies of violence. The Fu’amotu airport is now a place of excitement and joy for Tongans who are coming home to their families; it is also a gateway for new opportunities for those who are leaving home to explore new places and to look for a better way to support their families. It is a space for those of us who have been widely dispersed across the diaspora to return to the homes of our ancestors. It is within these complicated and layered spaces where I have begged the questions about the purpose and place of the Tongan military.

This thesis has created a timeline of the changing attitudes in Tonga, concerning warfare on the global stage, making it easier to analyze the true purpose of the Tongan military. To begin, I shared my positionality. I have a very particular lens as a Tongan woman living and studying in the U.S., and the insights and analyses I’ve constructed in this thesis by no means represent the opinion of the majority of Tongans living in Tonga. Instead, my ideas reflect a particular theoretical genealogy that has shaped the critiques on militarization of the Pacific. The foremost influential academic on my analysis of the Tongan military has no doubt been Teresia Teaiwa, who I acknowledge in my introduction and continued to refer to throughout my thesis.

In chapter one, I explored 19th century Tongan sovereignty – constructed under Tāufa‘āhau – as predicated upon European standards of governance and acceptance. I suggested that Tāufa‘āhau’s rise to power differed significantly from his predecessors since he focused on

¹ Ideas based on discussions with coordinators and contributors to the “(Re)Mapping Indigenous and Settler Geographies in the Pacific Conference,” October 19-20, 2018, at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. In conversation with PhD Candidate in American Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Katherine Achacoso and M.A. Candidate in Pacific Island Studies at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Patricia Tupou

creating a nation-state. This creation required that he abolish some of the most important and ancient social, political, and cultural, power structures that governed Tonga for centuries. Another transformative event in the Kingdom's early history was the establishment of Tonga as a protectorate. Tonga's protectorate status deeply damaged the sovereignty that Tāufa'āhau and Tupou II worked so ardently to protect. In chapter two, I explain that due to the strained relationship between Britain and Tonga, Tonga's response to WWI was limited. Only those who felt passionately about the cause of the war joined, and only those with the means contributed to the war effort. This response starkly contrasted with Tonga's response to WWII, in which Queen Sālote established the Tonga Defence Force in order to serve Allied forces.

In chapter three, I looked at Tonga's involvement in WWII. The whole of Tongan society was mobilized in support of the effort. In part, Tongan enthusiasm was derived from anxieties over a Japanese or German attack on Tonga, but much of the excitement was also out of support for Queen Sālote and for Britain. While I highlighted the problematic aspects of Tonga's participation, I also drew attention to the generous fundraising efforts Tongans created and the braveness of Tongan soldiers who fought alongside Fijians and Solomon Islanders in the Solomon and Bougainville campaigns. While I acknowledge the importance of these sacrifices, I also asked: given that the Tongan military was not constructed to protect Tonga against foreign enemies, but rather to support Britain, is the Tongan military a proxy for UK, US, and AU interests? If the control of violence via the military and police is a central tenet of the modern nation state, then is Tonga's sovereignty affected by contracting out their military to foreign nations? I assert that these questions and critiques should not belie the multiple personal and patriotic motivations behind Tongan participation in WWI or WWII. Understanding and critiquing the mechanism of imperialism and militarization does not need to be understood as conflicting with the agency of islander soldiers. Rather, both agency and outside imperial influences operate within a complex system of nation-states, citizenship, policing, and violence that continues to function across the world and into the present.

Lastly, chapter four looks to more contemporary engagements of Tonga's military. I discuss Tonga's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan as a consequence of Tonga's desire to create jobs and appease donor states as opposed to responding to public support. I argue that the same can be said for RAMSI – given that Tonga profited from their participation in the mission and has continued to provide labor to Australia's peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. Such

close relationships with volatile and powerful nations could turn Tonga into a de facto U.S. or Australian military base, placing Tonga in a politically haphazard space between bigger and wealthier nations. Ultimately, I argue that military dependence leaves Tonga subject to other nation's destructive military industrial complexes. Further, Tonga's partnership and growing dependence on military powers is a danger to Tongan sovereignty as well as global peace. I also drew attention to the anxieties expressed by Tongan citizens, about the military's allegiance to the public or to the King. These anxieties were stoked by the harsh response of the military to the 2006 riots as well as the King changing the name of the military to His Majesty's Armed Forces.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, ideally Tonga would cease all military engagements, and focus on economic development that directly benefits Tongans without having to participate in foreign military campaigns. However, if the Tongan governments continues to see Tongan collaboration with foreign militaries as necessary, the HMAF should only participated in military campaigns that are directly relevant to the safety of Tonga or for the broader Pacific. While the UN and PIF are not perfect entities, having their approval of the campaigns that the HMAF joins could possibly protect or limit the extent to which Tonga militarizes.



Fig. 5 Photo taken by author, June 2018. Ha'amonga 'a Maui.

In closing, I'd like to reflect on the ways Tongan spaces have transformed overtime. While this thesis' timeframe has spanned over 100 years and has raised issues that I believe to be deeply serious and threatening, in the scope of Tonga, the events delineated in this thesis are mere flashes in the deep ocean of Tongan history. Although it may seem that "disarticulation" from the global MIC is a distant aspiration, it's important to remember Tonga's history of resilience and the persistence of Tongan and culture through the millennia and in the face of imperialism and diaspora. Most likely the greatest symbol of Tongan pride and culture is the Ha'amonga 'a Maui. When I last visited Ha'amonga 'a Maui, with my cousin Sateki, in the summer of 2018, I watched as a Tongan father hoisted his son onto the better footholds of the giant coral rock structure. The boy sat on top of the ancient megalith. Sateki teased me and told me to go join the little boy, boasting that he himself had climbed it many times before. The Ha'amonga 'a Maui was once the grand entrance to the fortress of the Tu'i Tonga. The heavy and sacred mana of the Tu'i Tonga would never have allowed small children to climb the gate to his fortress. Likewise, the US and NZ soldiers who climbed it in WWII would also have been unwelcome. However, sacred places change over time and so do the ways that we interact with such spaces. The Ha'amonga 'a Maui has seen the rise and fall of the Tongan empire, the growth of the Tongan kingdom, and the ebb and flow of imperialism. It has seen many changes in Tonga's landscape and in the people of Tonga. It has felt the touch of those WWII *palangi* soldiers, and of countless others – tourists, Tongans, and non-Tongans alike. But the sun continues to rise directly above the trilithon, just as it was designed to do so, and it will continue to see whatever the tides of the Moana nui bring to Tonga's shores next.

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